

The Nation

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EDITORIAL

TOP-SECRET LOBBYING

From time to time, policy-makers in Washington find it necessary to discover a document, diary or piece of disinformation to justify programs of no value or strategies of deceit. "Invent" is often a more appropriate verb than "discover." There was the hilarious hoax some years back involving the production of a Sandinista agent in a Salvadoran rebel camp. When the defector, Orlando Tardencillas, was brought before the press, he told his own truthful story instead of the tale cooked up for him by the C.I.A. and blew the whole operation. Other attempts to pin acts of international aggression on the Sandinistas have been no more successful. The documents purporting to show that great quantities of arms are flowing from Managua to the Salvadoran guerrilla strongholds reveal their Langley watermarks too clearly.

President Reagan's current campaign to create a bigger superfund for the Nicaraguan *contras* has not been greeted with the anticipated enthusiasm in Congress, not even in Republican ranks. So it is not surprising that another bit of specious documentation has been produced to bolster the Administration's requests. The White House called in Republican legislators and showed them a C.I.A. report on Sandinista plans to influence public opinion and lobby Congress to block aid to the *contras*. The White House said the Sandinistas did not shrink from using disinformation to further their ends, and it named a few U.S. groups supporting them.

But the plan may have misfired. Republican Dave Durenberger, chair of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, attacked the White House lobbying effort, and said the release of the C.I.A. report could compromise U.S. "assets" in the Sandinista government. The damage the smears have done to groups opposed to Reagan's war may be less easily undone.

'OUR' ANTI-AMERICANS
Christopher Hitchens

COLOMBIA'S GUERRILLAS
Merrill Collett

GHANA AND TOGO
George Packer

SOCs AND GREASERS
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SNOW JOB IN DETROIT

MR. IACocca MEETS THE PRESS

ROBERTA BRANDES GRATZ AND
ERIC FETTMANN

"I think we've shown that we can play hardball with anybody. Now I have a little hardball of my own to play." That's how Lee Iacocca, on national television, kicked off his impassioned attack on Interior Secretary Donald Hodel's surprise decision to remove him as chair of the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Centennial Commission. Iacocca promised to clear up the public's confusion over the project; instead, he added some of his own.

Iacocca's hourlong press conference in Detroit on February 13 was a startling conglomeration of statements completely at variance with the four-year record we documented in *The Nation* last year, in "The Selling of Miss Liberty" (November 9) and "The Battle for Ellis Island" (November 30). To watch Iacocca was to marvel at his manipulation of the truth; his audience of journalists was mesmerized, still unfamiliar enough with the full story to ask meaningful questions. Iacocca's snow job underscored the urgent need for more public examination of the centennial restoration effort.

To summarize the events leading up to the Detroit automaker's latest show: Iacocca chaired both the commission, a government advisory body designed to plan the restoration of the statue and Ellis Island, and the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, a private group which was set up to be the prime fundraiser but which effectively took over control of the planning as well. On January 29 foundation counsel Palmer Wald notified Armen Avedisian and J.J. Simmons 3d, commission members

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LETTERS.

BELABORING THE WINDS OF CHANGE

Arlington, Mass.

As one of the "avowed radicals . . . active in labor" mentioned by Harold Meyerson ["Winds of Change in Big Labor," Jan. 11], I found his account of recent A.F.L.-C.I.O. convention debates and related developments in organized labor to be more an exercise in wishful thinking than an accurate analysis of the situation.

In a manner familiar to readers of *The AFL-CIO News*, Meyerson manages to depict a few gentle breezes of reform as a gale of revolutionary proportions. I wish it were really possible in 1986 to announce "the transformation of A.F.L.-C.I.O. politics." But I think most objective left-wing observers of the labor movement would agree that such an announcement is premature. The obstacles to revival and radicalization of labor continue to loom large indeed, and uninformed union boosterism contributes little to the process of overcoming them.

Meyerson's treatment of the growing anti-intervention movement in labor is illustrative of his triumphalist approach. While the activities of the National Labor Committee in Support of Democracy and Human Rights in El Salvador and many local anti-intervention groups around the country have become an important check on the cold-warriors who control the A.F.L.-C.I.O.'s foreign policy apparatus, the fact remains that the cold-warriors still control it.

Not a single national union—not even a strong Labor Committee supporter like the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers—has severed its ties with the American Institute for Free Labor Development (AIFLD) or its counterparts in counterinsurgency in Africa and Asia. And contrary to Meyerson's suggestion that Red-baiting is a thing of the past in labor's foreign policy debates because "so many heavy hitters from the Executive Council [are] on our side," the leadership's attempts to stifle dissent have increased in the past year at the grass-roots level.

Meyerson's top-down view of the forces for change in organized labor also leads him to ignore the real source of new initiatives in the area of organizing. To the extent that there is any rethinking of organizing strategies at the top, it is the result of workplace organizing undertaken during the past decade by groups like the United Labor Unions and the Working Women/9-to-5 network (both now part of the Service Employees Union). They have been recruiting workers into membership organizations for years—regardless of whether there was sufficient support for formal collective bargaining. Activists involved in such efforts are skeptical about the A.F.L.-C.I.O.'s version of this approach only because it focuses more on providing unorganized workers

with insurance benefits or other services for a fee than on mobilizing them in campaigns against employers over job-related issues.

Most union officials—including some of Meyerson's favorite "union progressives"—are still not comfortable with developing union recruitment campaigns based on genuine shop-floor struggle because that approach is so rare in established bargaining units. The A.F.L.-C.I.O.'s promotion of "one-on-one" canvassing of union members for very limited political purposes is hardly proof of any widespread willingness to rally the rank and file in the face of the most severe employer attacks of the past half-century.

There has been little leadership encouragement of membership mobilization tactics and strategies in the many important anti-concession struggles of the past few years. In general the A.F.L.-C.I.O. and most national unions have responded to the devastating six-year concession bargaining trend—a "wrenching change" in labor-management relations that Meyerson doesn't even bother to mention—with embarrassed silence. Thus the bitter defeats in major national and regional strikes against Greyhound, McDonnell Douglas, Phelps-Dodge, Continental Airlines, Louisiana Pacific and others.

Anticoncession strikes have, in fact, often been waged over the objections of national union officials, who have frequently gone to great lengths to discourage mass picketing, interunion solidarity and other forms of militant rank-and-file activity. The plight of Commercial Workers Local P-9 in its five-month strike against Hormel in Austin, Minnesota, is one good example.

Meyerson's concluding quotation from United Automobile Workers founding father Victor Reuther ("We haven't come as far as we should in democratic unionism") is one of his article's few realistic appraisals of the progress of the left in the labor movement. In a number of recent speeches and interviews in *In These Times* and *Labor Notes*, Reuther has been making an incisive critique of the nonadversarial approach favored by a number of leading unions and the A.F.L.-C.I.O., which he now likens to the pre-C.I.O. American Federation of Labor. This more radical and historical view of the crisis of organized labor has far more to recommend it than anything in Meyerson's Pollyanna-ish compilation of material from union press releases.

Steve Early

MEYERSON REPLIES

Los Angeles

Triumphalism, huh? I suppose if I had simply proclaimed the transformation of A.F.L.-C.I.O. politics, the charge would have some merit, but that is far from the

spirit and substance of my article. Rather, I demonstrated how previously sacrosanct areas of federation decision-making such as foreign policy have become contested terrain to an unprecedented degree. I am contending that the battle is joined, not won, and somehow Steve Early has got that one backward. I will comment on only a few of his misreadings.

I share many of his criticisms of the federation's version of associate membership and expressed those criticisms in the article.

Of course the A.F.L.-C.I.O. and AIFLD are raising the volume of their attack, trying to block tours of Central American unionists with whom they disagree, putting on an AIFLD roadshow and what not. But their fury is rising in direct proportion to the degree to which they are, for the first time, threatened. That is why their people have suddenly materialized as advisers to a number of international presidents; that is why Lane Kirkland was so furious at the close of the convention's foreign policy debate. The comment on Red-baiting with which Early takes exception described the right's reaction at the convention, not in the field, where such attacks continue.

As for the allegation that my article reads like a federation press release, I'm not sure how to verify that, since the federation's daily convention journals neglected to cover the foreign policy debate. I understand that the federation leadership may have an interest in denying that the balance of forces in the movement is changing; I don't understand why Early would share that interest. Certainly the news reports of the convention debate that appeared in journals such as *Labor Report on Central America* reflected the belief that the convention represented a breakthrough, though most certainly not a final victory, for the noninterventionist elements of labor.

Above all Early misreads my article when he contends that I view the changes in the labor movement as coming from the top down. Quite the contrary. I explicitly stated that the positive changes in the labor movement result from compositional shifts in the unionized work force and the rise to positions of secondary leadership of onetime 1960s radicals and other left-wing activists—indeed, the rise of a number of people who share Early's politics, broadly defined, if not, happily, Early's disposition, broadly defined.

Harrumphalism, perhaps. Triumphalism, no way.

Harold Meyerson

PRECISIONIST HISTORY

New York City

Stephen F. Cohen's thought-provoking column "Sovieticus" in the February 15 issue correctly emphasizes the important sym-

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EDITORIALS.

Reagan's Coups

In the end it looked like a piece of cake. All the Reagan Administration had to do was officially withdraw its support from President Marcos, find two friendly characters to neutralize the diehard Philippine military and load the decrepit dictator on a waiting plane at Clark Air Base. It was not much harder, for all the Philippines' size and power, than the bum's rush only a few weeks before in Haiti. When the United States finds the will and puts its mind to the task, it can remove almost any authoritarian ally it pleases. Without energetic popular support and faced with a genuine democratic opposition movement, those regimes rely entirely on Washington for survival. As the thumb turns down, the solid structures

crumble: old friends and trusted aides desert dictators and scramble for deals with hated opponents; bureaucrats and merchants suddenly see new opportunities arriving with foreign aid; and the servile press easily identifies its new masters. Exiles, insurgents, critics and perennial malcontents who have managed to maintain good relations with political forces in America during their long years of lonely opposition are allowed in for the kill; those who reject the values of the imperial system are of course denied its rewards and may not share in the triumph.

If it's all so easy in the Philippines and Haiti, why stop there? Reagan is on a roll. South Korea should not present much of a problem: President Chun Doo Hwan already can read the graffiti on the wall and is moving to lighten his oppressive grip. U.S. Air Force jet and a permanent vacation from power.

Then there's Chile, Paraguay, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia and Pakistan, countries where U.S. influence is so strong that a break would seriously weaken the regimes. How pointless it is for President Reagan to waste his efforts on places where he has no serious economic interest or moral standing. For quick results, nothing beats a State Department coup against a right-wing dictatorship or a racial oligarchy locked into the American banking system and the Western defense apparatus.

The danger is that Reagan will misread the lessons of the history that his Administration is now making, that he will take his recent successes as a sign that imperial intervention is valuable in itself and applicable in any context. On the contrary, it is always problematic and often destructive. Given the tradition of American colonial involvement in the Philippines and the integration of that country's politics and economics in the American system, Reagan did not have the option of inaction. Marcos was a creature of U.S. power, just as Aquino was an instrument of U.S. policy; although they represented different and often conflicting forces in the foreign affairs establishment, they were both vectors of the same interventionist imperative. The time came for Reagan to choose between them, but the bigger choice to intervene had already been made.

That is not the case, at least not exactly, in Central America, where the Sandinista government has removed Nicaragua from American domination, and Reagan's objective is to re-establish a measure of control. Intervention there is still an option, practically and logically. In the Philippines, to do nothing was to take sides; in Nicaragua, to do nothing is to withdraw from the fray. It is clearly the wiser course, but Reagan is not likely to follow it.

With the flight of Marcos and the accession of Aquino the role of the United States changes, but it does not end. Henry Kissinger, who has an eye for the ironies of intervention, suggested last week that the situation in Manila is comparable to that in Saigon in 1963, when the United States helped arrange the assassination of Premier Ngo Dinh Diem in hopes that a more popular government could deal more effectively with the guerrilla insurgency. What happened, Kissinger said, was that the United States became increasingly involved with the new regime it created.

There are indications already that Washington is up to its eyeballs in what it optimistically calls the Philippine transition. The Administration's point men in the final assault on the Marcos regime, Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Lieut. Gen. Fidel Ramos, were quickly installed as the military chiefs of the Aquino government. Surely the rest of the Cabinet was chosen, to some degree, on the basis of its acceptability to U.S. interests. The throngs in the streets were still celebrating when Philip Habib touched down in Manila to oversee the establishment of the new order. On his first mission, to arrange Marcos's fall, he was called Reagan's fact-finder. This time he will more likely be a viceroy.

Revolutions really begin when power is seized; all the rest is prelude. Whether Aquino's "people's power" will develop an institutional basis for substantial change in the Philippines is still an open question. The amorphous mass move-

ment she led so effectively in the presidential campaign could provide the constituency for radical reform. Much of what Aquino said on the hustings suggests that she is willing to consider a program that could moderate the unrestrained system of privilege and the unexamined alliance with U.S. security interests that Marcos supported. But she will have her hands full fending off the opponents of change, many of whom she has already included in her government. Her overseas friends in the U.S. Congress and the Administration are looking for ways to define her movement and influence her program so that their interests will be protected. An aide to Senator Richard Lugar, who spearheaded the Administration's anti-Marcos campaign in its final weeks, said that the United States could support Aquino because of "the existence of a middle-class alternative to Marcos, composed of people who talked, acted and even looked a little like your own friends." In the Philippines, the revolution will begin when the political alternative begins to look a little strange.

There are few times in history as satisfying as the hour of a dictator's defeat. The statues tumble, and the people cheer. Everything is possible; nothing is denied. Filipinos who carried on the struggle against Marcos for two decades while successive American administrations showered him with moral and material support deserve this moment to enjoy the credit that is due them. Too soon they will find themselves in debt again to the power behind the empty throne.

Hope and Failure

Two recent news items from the Middle East contained the varying quantities of optimism and pessimism that permeate all human affairs. Anatoly Shcharansky's immigration to Israel after eight years in a Soviet prison sounded a pure note of triumph for the human spirit; yet there was a lingering undertone of sorrow for those who are still unfree. The failure of the peace talks in Amman, Jordan, seemed to underscore the intractability of the Israeli-Palestinian dispute; yet last week the tentative sounds of new diplomatic activity could be heard.

Some decades ago, Isaac Deutscher, the onetime rabbi, journalist and biographer of Trotsky, suggested a metaphor for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It went something like this: an apartment building is on fire; an occupant of the building jumps out the window and lands on an innocent passerby. Seriously injured, the passerby refuses to acknowledge that the occupant had to jump. The occupant, in return, brusquely refuses to accept any responsibility for what happened. Rather than recognize the tragic circumstances that brought them together and find a rational way to repair the damage, both parties quarrel bitterly.

The refusal to recognize the legitimate rights and aspirations of "the other" remains the nub of the Israeli-Palestinian dispute. The recent breakdown of talks between Jordan's King Hussein and the P.L.O.'s Al Fatah faction, headed by Yasir Arafat, again lays bare the core of the problem. It is also true, however, that unpleasant events

follow their own timetable in the Middle East. The collapse of King Hussein's peace initiative is depressing, but is it truly the end of a partnership between Arafat and Hussein? More than a few students of the problem suggest that Arafat will return to Jordan after consulting with groups in the Palestinian diaspora. In making a case for resumption, he will be able to point to two concessions made by the Americans during January's arduous round of talks in Amman. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Murphy told Arafat via Hussein that the United States is willing to participate in an international—that is, Soviet-attended—conference and that it would agree to accept P.L.O. representatives at the peace table.

The latter concession was conditioned on Arafat's acceptance of U.N. Resolutions 242 and 338, and his renunciation of armed struggle. But nowhere was the United States willing to recognize the Palestinians' right to self-determination, so Arafat walked out. Hardliners in Fatah ask, Why attend an international conference that will pronounce, for all time, the defeat of the Palestinian people?

That is a legitimate question, and it exposes the flaw in the Amman approach. Why should the Palestinians have to plead for a right—self-determination—accorded all peoples by international law? But it is also shortsighted. The Palestinian leadership fails to understand what has made their Zionist adversaries so successful: create facts, pick up one dunam of land and then another, and don't haggle over language. If the Palestinians' aim is to salvage a homeland from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, they lost an opportunity by cutting off negotiations with Hussein.

The King correctly identified the greatest problem in the Palestinian movement: the inability of the leadership to negotiate with "commitment, credibility and constancy." That weakness results from the cleavage in the diaspora between the dispossessed who live in miserable refugee camps and the inhabitants of the occupied territories, who still cling to part of their homeland. Hussein is right in asking the Palestinian leadership to devise a strategy that advances the interests of both groups.

The only identifiable winner of this disappointing round seems to be the Israeli right wing. The rightists fear the day when the Palestinians finally say yes. But the Greater Israel they are intent on creating is beset by social and economic problems. They risk ignoring the prescient observation made by Deutscher just after the June 1967 war:

The war and the "miracle" of Israel's victory have solved none of the problems that confront Israel and the Arab states. They have, on the contrary, aggravated all the old issues and created new, more dangerous ones. They have not increased Israel's security, but have rendered it more vulnerable than it had been before 5 June 1967. This "six days wonder," this latest, all-too-easy triumph of Israeli arms, will be seen one day, in a not very remote future, to have been a disaster in the first instance for Israel itself.

All parties need Shcharansky's fortitude and adaptability; now he says that he intends to study Arabic. As Fayez Abu Rahmeh, a prominent Palestinian lawyer, told *The New York Times*, "Nothing is final in the Middle East."

THE 120th ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATION MAGAZINE

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Shootout in Yemen

More than a month after the short but bloody civil war in South Yemen, which left as many as 10,000 dead and split the state, ruling party and armed forces into two warring factions, unanswered questions remain. One thing is clear: opponents of Ali Nasser Mohammed al-Hassani have taken power, driving the former President into exile in Ethiopia and carrying out a systematic purge of their enemies. But the causes of the sudden explosion are still murky.

The two sides give conflicting accounts of what touched off the crisis. The leaders of the new regime claim that Ali Nasser precipitated it on January 13 by trying to assassinate his rivals on the fifteen-member Politburo. They criticize Ali Nasser for concentrating power in his own hands (he served as President, Secretary General of the party and, until last year, Prime Minister) and for his policy of relaxing state economic controls somewhat and seeking better relations with the Arab oil states, which, they said, led to corruption, antisocialist behavior and demoralization in South Yemen.

Ali Nasser, who now issues denunciations of the "swaying clique" in Aden, counters that his government was the victim of a longstanding conspiracy. A key figure in that conspiracy, he says, was Politburo member Ali Ahmed Nasser Antar, who, as Minister of Defense from 1978 to 1981, filled the tank corps with recruits from his tribal homeland, Dhali'. Others, including former Minister of the Interior Saleh Mosleh Qassem, also from Dhali', built up networks of supporters in the police and the militia and stock-piled weapons in anticipation of the coup. They brought men and equipment into Aden under the pretext of preparing for a possible Israeli strike on the capital in retaliation for the Achille Lauro affair and other Palestinian actions. (Israel accuses South Yemen of supporting Palestinian guerrillas.)

The communist movement has been riven by factionalism since its founding, in 1963, as the National Liberation Front. During the guerrilla war for independence against the British, which lasted until 1967, the front fought against a rival group, the Front for the Liberation of Occupied South Yemen. The new nation's first two Presidents, Qahtan al-Shaabi and Salem Robai Ali, were killed in internecine clashes. The third President, Abdul Fatah Ismail, who came to power in 1978, was forced into exile in 1980 because he had failed to deal with the country's economic problems. When Abdul Fatah returned from exile early last year, he became the rallying point of the opposition to Ali Nasser. In June, after the President's supporters won 70 percent of the seats in elections for delegates to the October party congress, the opposition began to organize. Given that history, it is of secondary importance who fired the first shot on January 13. Both sides had long been ready for a showdown.

From the sketchy information available, the conflict had at least three elements. First, many of Ali Nasser's opponents had lost political influence in recent years, including Abdul Fatah, who died in the fighting; Mohammed Said Abdullah Mohsen, former head of the intelligence services

who was demoted to ambassador to Hungary and is now Secretary to the party's Central Committee; and Ali Salem al-Bedh, who was once Minister of State for Local Administration and who has been appointed Secretary General. The Yemenite Socialist Party has always been highly centralized, and Ali Nasser's opponents were not seeking to make it more democratic.

Policy issues played a role in the conflict as well. In the past, there were major debates in the leadership over how much support to give leftist guerrillas in neighboring North Yemen. Some of the guerrillas who retreated to the south in 1982 reportedly fought on the rebel side. Indeed, a number of the coup leaders, including Abdul Fatah and Mohammed Said Abdullah, are North Yemenis. A more divisive quarrel in the Politburo was over economic policy. In relaxing restrictions on visits home by South Yemenis working abroad and loosening government controls on farmers, fishermen and traders, Ali Nasser seems to have antagonized many party members. Underlying the power struggle and the policy disputes was a diffuse legacy of underdevelopment—economic shortages, poverty, a lack of skilled workers and technicians, and suspicion and factionalism rooted in tribalism. South Yemen is not a tribal society in the sense of being populated by armed nomads, but tribal loyalties persist among the rural and urban populations and were influential in the recruiting and building of the new party and state.

There was considerable speculation by the U.S. State Department that the Soviet Union was behind the coup. The evidence is unconvincing. Prior to January 13 the Russians supported Ali Nasser's economic policies and encouraged unity among the different factions in the party. They encouraged Abdul Fatah to return home in the expectation that he would help strengthen the party. They seem to have had little awareness of the conspiracies that were brewing.

Once the crisis exploded, Soviet policy shifted daily. At first Moscow backed Ali Nasser, then it tried to mediate and then, after four days of fighting, it sought to install a plausible successor regime. The Russians are mainly interested in preserving their military bases in South Yemen, preventing a protracted civil war in which outside powers might intervene, and limiting the damage to their image and that of South Yemen in the Arab world. Now they have accepted the new regime as a *fait accompli*.

The government will have a tough time. The residue of hatred, suspicion and destruction is surely immense. The personnel of the new state and party include a number of detested figures from the past, as well as individuals whose technocratic qualifications give them little weight. Reports of mass arrests and killings continue to emanate from the country. The new regime has appealed for assistance from abroad, but it is doubtful that the Arab states or the Soviet Union will be eager to help a regime that has so spectacularly discredited itself in recent weeks. FRED HALLIDAY

Fred Halliday is the author of Arabia Without Sultans: A Political Survey of Instability in the Arab World (Vintage) and Iran: Dictatorship and Development (Penguin).

MINORITY REPORT.

CHRISTOPHER HITCHENS

What bliss it was on February 21 to hear Ferdinand Marcos denounce Americans as "modern-day imperialists" who threatened "foreign intervention in our national affairs." This little ponce has been living off American aid and indulgence for a lifetime, yet he doesn't scruple to trade in anti-Americanism and even to allege that the C.I.A. was behind the opposition party in his hastily called election. It's only a couple of years since Roberto D'Aubuisson, chief spear carrier for anticommunism in El Salvador, made the same allegation. Menachem Begin, who can also boast a few scalps, was never happier than when denouncing American bullying of his small, defiant nation, and never more inventive than when he reminded Ronald Reagan that the nation that pioneered the free-fire zone in Vietnam was in a weak position to criticize the body count at Sabra and Shatila.

More recently, President P.W. Botha has issued staunch denunciations of outside interference in South Africa, singling out the United States for a special decoration in hypocrisy. I remember being in Chile when the U.S. Embassy expressed mild reservations about one of President Augusto Pinochet's "referendums." The official language about *Yanqui* arrogance was quite something to hear. I have heard the same from the brutish junta in Turkey whenever there is a whimper from the Administration about human rights or the amputation of Cyprus. And last year in South Korea I was privileged to see another garrison regime puff out its chest and repudiate any American interest in the case of Kim Dae Jung, the man who had made the mistake of coming in a close second in the last election to which anyone paid attention. "We are not a client state," cried the dictators. Oh yeah?

How rich and strange is the pathology of conservative anti-Americanism. The Reaganites must feel it especially keenly. There is an element of rank ingratitude in the anti-imperialism of the right when one thinks of all they've done for D'Aubuisson, say, or Marcos or Chun or Botha. How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child. The pain is not lessened by the child's being a little bastard.

The term "anti-American" nonetheless occupies a special place in the Administration's lexicon of abuse. Any movement, government or group to which it is applied is clearly "out." Senior Administration spokesmen, as well as the Man With the Foolish Grin himself, have argued that the Sandinistas deserve death because their anthem contains disobliging remarks about *Yanqui* imperialism. State and Defense Department officials go quite puce in the face when asked about Andreas Papandreou, the Euro-anti-American par excellence. Yet Greek rightists have been saying for years that Papandreou is suspect because he is more American than Greek, and only last summer I heard him reviled, at the climactic election rally of the Greek opposition, as a man who preferred the company of Americans to that of Hellenes. E.P. Thompson and his supporters in Britain are routinely denounced as anti-American, even though vulgar prejudice against the United States in Brit-

ain is most commonly expressed by conservatives.

I may have missed something, but I have never heard America attacked by the left on the grounds that it is rotten with Jews, homosexuals and decadent intellectuals. Yet this is precisely what the D'Aubuissons, the Bothas and the Pinochets say. (Admittedly, Begin does not use that language, though it is ironic that he should excoriate America's conduct in Vietnam after having supported it so loudly at the time.) Criticism of the United States from the international left is usually of a rather naïve, unoriginal kind, tending to stress the gulf between the ideals of the Founding Fathers and the practice of the new imperium.

In the past month, we have seen two favorites of the White House—Duvalier and Marcos—removed by their long-suffering peoples. The Reaganites are wearing the medals of these defeats and awarding themselves bouquets for achievements not their own. Let us admit that the Administration escaped disaster by not taking its own advice and by ignoring the mewings of Kirkpatrick, Podhoretz, and Evans and Novak. We now enter the era of triple standards. The whole structure of tyranny has been shown to be worthless overnight; something to be borne in mind when we hear the next lot of excuses for not doing anything about South Africa. So, those who have opposed the Administration all along could at least be spared the final insult of being called anti-American.

* * *

Something else I would like to be spared is the current neocon self-righteousness about the black family. I happen to live in a predominantly black part of Washington. Next door are two women who are bringing up three children and doing very well at it. Looking out back, I can see a lot of young men in a public housing project who might as well not have been born so far as this Administration is concerned. If I take an atheistic stroll on Sunday morning, I see entire close-knit clans, following a code of family life that has been abandoned almost everywhere else in America, walking to church dressed in their best clothes. But if I turn on the television set or open the newspaper, I am assailed with slightly wet-lipped accounts of casual sex in the ghetto, and distinctly prurient writing about incest and pubescent intercourse. As usual those who care the least are making the most ballyhoo. It is an old story. When Daniel Patrick Moynihan wrote his celebrated report, he seems to have wanted to catch the eye of such people. As he wrote in *Commentary* at the time: "The reaction of the liberal left to the issue of the Negro family was decisive. . . . They would have none of it. No one was going to talk about their poor people that way." But as Peter Steinfels pointed out some years ago, this is untrue insofar as the report was welcomed by liberals and radicals like Kenneth Clark, Martin Luther King Jr., Michael Harrington, Christopher Jencks and many others. What the report's critics were worried about was the possibility that reactionaries would seize on it as an excuse to blame the victim, and would move to a policy of sub-Darwinist social indifference. Some people will believe anything.

ARTICLES.

■ PALACE OF JUSTICE AFTERMATH

Guerrilla Rising In Colombia

MERRILL COLLETT

Cali, Colombia

This vibrant city offers welcome relief from the damp cold of dark, formal Bogotá, 300 miles to the northeast. Celebrated in guidebooks for its gentle weather and lively night life, Cali has recently gained notoriety because of the increased guerrilla presence in the surrounding countryside. The most active group is M-19, which leaped into world prominence last November, when its fighters seized the Palace of Justice in the capital.

In December, in what was billed as a "Christmas clean-up," 3,000 soldiers stormed the hillside squatter settlement of Siloé, just outside Cali, attempting to rout out a dozen or so M-19 guerrillas. Three days of house-to-house fighting left at least seventeen people dead and forty wounded, most of them civilians. "They wanted to clean up Cali with a dirty war," a survivor told reporters.

The Siloé assault was the army's alternative to a negotiated settlement with the nation's 20,000 guerrillas. President Belisario Betancur took office in 1982 pledging to end the thirty-year insurgency, and his government signed a truce with most of the eight rebel groups in May 1984, including M-19. That move was seen as an attempt to pry open the nation's tight bipartisan political system, which is dominated by the Liberal and Conservative parties, whose common upper-class interests outweigh their political differences. But Betancur's peace process ground to a halt in the ruins of the Palace of Justice.

By refusing to negotiate with the M-19 forces who were occupying the building to protest government violations of the cease-fire, Betancur set the stage for the death of some one hundred guerrillas and civilians, who were slain in the army's counterattack. Colombians refer to the two-day battle as the twenty-eight-hour coup. Former Foreign Minister Alfredo Vazquez Carrizosa, a member of Betancur's Conservative Party who advocates negotiating with the anti-government groups, now says the peace process is dead. "The Palace of Justice was the turning point," he said in an interview. "The initiative has passed to the military." Subsequent events, notably the attack on Siloé, suggest that a military pacification effort has begun. The failure of Betancur's attempt to open up the two-party oligarchy has exposed the shallowness of democracy's roots in Colombia and planted the seeds of civil war.

Merrill Collett is a Caracas-based journalist who covers Latin American affairs for several newspapers and magazines in the United States, Britain and Canada.

The fighting has been especially intense in the Cauca River Valley. Nestled between the western and central Andean ranges and straddling the strategically important southern highway to Bogotá, the fertile valley produces 12 million tons of sugar cane a year; its total agricultural output accounts for 10 percent of the country's gross national product. Cali, an agricultural boomtown of more than 1.5 million inhabitants, is one of Colombia's three largest cities. It's also the focus of M-19 organizing efforts and those of several other groups.

The reason is plain to see from the rooftop terrace of the Hotel New York, a favorite stopping place for out-of-town business people. To the east and west the squatter settlements press in on the city like encampments of soldiers in a class war. To the north Sixth Avenue's fashionable boutiques invite the wealthy to park their Mercedes and browse among the French imports. To the south the bars and prostitutes along Carrera 8 attract young workers seeking momentary escape.

The shantytowns around Cali have become home to thousands of peasants who were forced off their land by hired gunmen of the sugar cane *hacendados* or who fled the fighting in the countryside. The pattern of land ownership in the Cauca Valley, as in the rest of Colombia, is highly skewed. A government survey taken several years ago estimated that 3 percent of the nation's landowners held 55 percent of the land, and the trend is toward even greater consolidation.

The largest squatter settlement is in Aquablanca, which stretches for miles along the city's eastern edge. Its estimated 300,000 people light their earthen houses with stolen electricity and drink water from dirty wells. Swarms of barefoot children play in the rutted streets. M-19 recruiters have been active there and in Siloé for years.

Although M-19 has fewer than 1,000 fighters, its daring assaults on symbolically important targets, like the Palace of Justice, have won it worldwide media attention. The group is an offshoot of former dictator Gen. Gustavo Rojas Pinilla's populist movement and vaguely describes itself as being nationalist. It takes its name from the April 19, 1970, election, which it claims fraudulently denied Rojas Pinilla the presidency.

Defectors from the group, among them Ramiro Lucio, a former member of its high command, have criticized it for following the Latin American *caudillismo* tradition, emphasizing charismatic leadership instead of offering a political program. Jaime Bateman dominated the group until his death in 1983 in a plane crash. Leaders of the pro-Soviet Colombian Communist Party, which guides the 15,000-member peasant-based Colombian Armed Revolutionary Forces (FARC), attribute M-19's penchant for acts of political theater to its largely middle-class membership, consisting mostly of students and professionals.

In Aquablanca, M-19 seeks something more tangible than headlines, however. Its *comandante* there, a slender young man identified only as Victor, told me the group is trying to encourage residents "to make their own deci-

sions." He said that he and his comrades are organizing the community through civic action programs—laying water pipelines, for example. The guerrillas' strategy is to hold territory and "build an army."

Victor's involvement in the armed struggle is apparent. His left hand is missing, blown off, I was told, by a grenade in a battle with police at Cali's Valley University. He carries a gun tucked in his waistband, as do the former seminary student and the young Aquablanca recruit who accompanied him to our meeting. The ease with which armed M-19 cadre move about Aquablanca suggests that they enjoy considerable community support.

Political violence, never far beneath the surface in Colombia, has become part of daily life in the Cauca Valley. More than 2,000 people were killed last year, according to the Cali Committee of Solidarity with Political Prisoners. The verdant mountains ringing the valley are the scene of frequent shootouts between the army and the guerrillas. The peasants are often caught in the crossfire or tortured by soldiers seeking information about the insurgents. The violence extends beyond the countryside. When M-19 began organizing openly in Siloé and Aquablanca following the 1984 cease-fire, right-wing paramilitary groups calling themselves Relentless Justice and Black Flag emerged in Cali. They have murdered students, trade union leaders and even progressive members of the Liberal and Conservative parties. Last year they broadened their war to "social undesirables," killing thirty-five gay men in Cali.

Colombian human rights groups report that the death squads are linked to army officers and to F-2, the police intelligence unit. High-ranking Colombian officers have used the rhetoric of the Argentine military juntas, calling for a "third world war" against "international subversion." Disappearances reminiscent of the dirty war are becoming common in Cali. On January 9, 1982, witnesses reported that Lionel Lopez, a student at the university, had been abducted by five carloads of men. For nearly four years his mother and father searched for him, demonstrating in Bogotá's main square, badgering the police and seeking help from human rights groups. Last November 8, a caller told Aura Santamaria Lopez that her husband's tortured body had been found in a town near Cali; she has had no news about her son's fate. "Human life has lost its value in Colombia," she told me. "And human rights are more reviled every day."

The Rev. Javier Giraldo, a Jesuit priest active in human rights work, puts the number of Colombia's disappeared at 550, most of them snatched after Betancur came to power. Giraldo believes that military officials decided to crack down on dissidents at the beginning of Betancur's term and sought to avoid the bad publicity that followed the jailings ordered by his predecessor, Julio César Turbay. "There are no massive detentions," Giraldo said. "Instead, there is very selective repression, under which influential people in popular organizations are secretly eliminated."

Some of the violence against leftists can be attributed to the guerrillas themselves. Bitter disputes among and within the eight antigovernment groups have resulted in assassina-

tions and open shootouts. Some of these ideological disagreements reflect the splits in the world communist movement. The Maoist-oriented Popular Liberation Army, for example, was formed by a renegade faction of the Colombian Communist Party. Other clashes have resulted from differences over tactics. The break between the FARC and the Ricardo Franco Front occurred because the latter refused to honor the cease-fire and, it is rumored, because of a quarrel over the division of profits from drug smuggling. The front joined with M-19 and other groups in declaring war on the regime under the banner of the National Guerrilla Board, or Coordinadora.

During my interview with Victor a radio news program reported the discovery of a mass grave containing bodies identified as members of the Ricardo Franco Front. The killings were blamed on FARC, but the truth which eventually emerged was more grisly. After 158 bodies, some of them children, were unearthed in the Cauca Valley, front leader Javier Delgado told reporters he had ordered the torture and execution of his group's own members because many of them were informers for the army. His announcement set off shock waves on the left and prompted a vitriolic denunciation by M-19.

The guerrillas' disarray has made it easier for the army to push for a military solution in the Cauca Valley. Some optimists on the revolutionary left see the battle of Siloé as the model for all-out resistance to government repression. Former Foreign Minister Vazquez, however, predicts that Colombia is heading for "Guatemalaization," an endless cycle of leftist and rightist terrorism.

Whether the insurgents can turn isolated battles into a civil war will depend on their success in merging their struggle with the hopes and needs of the Colombian people. That



DRAWINGS BY M.G. LORD

jury is still out. "One hears so many things," said the young taxi driver who took me to Cali's bus terminal. "M-19 did this; M-19 did that. How do you know what to believe? The only thing you really know is that things are bad in Colombia." □

■ BORDERLINE CASES

Mirror Images of Ghana and Togo

GEORGE PACKER

In Africa you begin with borders. The one dividing Ghana and Togo meanders north from the West African coastline, along no particular road or river, as far as the dry reaches of the Sahel. At the Togolese capital of Lomé a stream of buses, women going to market and money-changers crosses all day until 6 o'clock, border-closing time, when the Ghanaians working in Lomé evacuate the bars and flock to customs for the trip home. Up in the bush, where there are no customs points, the border disappears altogether. Villages look the same on either side, the same local language is spoken, tribes and even families spill over into both countries. At this personal level the border seems an illusion, at most a nuisance perpetrated by obscure officials.

But at the government level the border is a palpable reality, a wall over which Ghana and Togo hurl accusations at each other. Togo charges that Ghana is slipping armed exiles across the boundary to plant bombs in its capital; Ghana claims Togo is fomenting subversion. Last November trade talks among four West African foreign ministers in Lagos, Nigeria, ended in a deadlock because Togo and Ghana refused to let their accusations rest. The border was closed throughout 1983, and with tensions rising, residents in Lomé report that the Togolese may close it again.

If Ghana and Togo weren't contiguous their governments would probably utter platitudes about African unity, but like other feuding African neighbors—Kenya and Tanzania, Mali and Burkina Faso—the border has made them enemies. The line is arbitrary, a zigzag drawn by French and British imperialists after World War I and still disputed by the Togolese, but it is final. On a recent trip to Togo and Ghana, the sight of the checkpoint at Lomé left me wondering whether official rhetoric in Africa had anything to do with the reality of Africans' lives. Politically, Ghana and Togo have taken opposite routes, but after a month in the two countries I am tempted to say that life is at bottom the same in each. "Socialist" or "capitalist," "revolutionary" or "stable," are so many labels pasted over equivalent misery.

George Packer has lived in Africa. His essays have appeared in Dissent, The Boston Review and elsewhere.

At first glance Togo isn't a bad advertisement for the Third World. The plush beachfront hotels in Lomé are well maintained, the best stores stocked with imported goods. I even noticed a number of well-off Togolese, a hint of the Africa to come, with a prosperous middle class that will make things work.

The regime of Gen. Gnassingbe Eyadema advertises Togo as a peaceful, stable country where Westerners can vacation or invest their money. Periodically, a group of businessmen whirls into the capital, is lodged in the presidential suites of the thirty-story Hotel 2 Février and is hailed on the front page of the government newspaper. "Then they leave, and we wait to hear from them," said a man with experience in the tourist industry. "After a few months they have forgotten us. By then we are welcoming the next group."

After years of ill-advised projects and corrupt practices that have reportedly made Eyadema one of the richest leaders in Africa, the national debt has passed \$1 billion. In 1983 Eyadema visited the United States and met with Ronald Reagan to plead for loans, citing Togo's "free enterprise" system and its pro-U.S. voting record in the United Nations Security Council as reasons for reward. He got the money.

There is no room for the economic crisis within the image the country presents to foreigners: a strange blend of prosperous modernism and "authentic" native life. No contradiction is seen when Eyadema cuts the ribbon for the 4th All Africa Trade Fair in the Togo 2000 Park one week, and helicopters into the interior to preside over a tribal fete the next. You can see this duality in an hour of Togolese television: a video of the latest reggae singer from the Ivory Coast is followed by a tribal dance—women in grass skirts, men beating drums. The impression is that Togolese happily belong to both worlds.

Those pictures may lull casual visitors into wishful thinking, for they contrast so pleasantly with the tragedies the world associates with Africa. Togo has no refugee camps peopled with skeletons, no guerrilla armies plundering the bush. What the government calls the "politics of peace and stability," no more than a slogan, almost seems to justify the corruption, the brutal repression of freedom. A disturbing thought arises: perhaps this is the price the Togolese have to pay to avoid the famine and civil war of Ethiopia or Uganda. But after nearly twenty years of one-man military rule, stability has formed a hard, stale crust.

In Ghana the military government calls itself revolutionary. When Flt. Lieut. (now Chairman) J.J. Rawlings took power in a 1981 New Year's Eve coup, he inherited an economy whose gross national product had declined for four years in a row, an inflation rate of nearly 140 percent, a cacao crop that was less than half the 1965 yield. Things quickly got worse. In 1983, Ghana was struck with famine, exacerbated by drought and brush fires. Essential goods disappeared from the markets, and a day's wage couldn't buy an egg.

The Black Star of Africa had achieved independence in 1957 amid prosperity and high hopes, but Kwame Nkrumah's socialism soured into dictatorship and ruinous

industrialization. His overthrow in 1966 was followed by a decade and a half of weak, corrupt civilian and military rule. Rawlings, young and charismatic, promised to wipe out corruption among the elite, break the chains of neocolonialism shackling the economy and restore Ghana's lost dignity.

His Provisional National Defense Council (P.N.D.C.) spawned other revolutionary initials, and rehabilitated the sullied memory of Nkrumah, whose slogans have been exhumed by the daily papers. I arrived in Ghana on the heels of two more famous visitors—Sam Nujoma, the head of the South West African People's Organization, and "Brother" Muammar el-Qaddafi. The residue of a barrage of anti-imperialist, anticapitalist rhetoric lingered in the papers, on the radio and on walls around the capital, Accra.

Yet the most potent initials in Ghana since the coup have been I.M.F. Ghana has swallowed the medicine of devaluation, free trade and decontrolled prices so faithfully that the World Bank recently praised the "sustained progress on its program of economic reforms" and granted it \$513 million in loans for 1986. Inflation has fallen to 20 percent, and most goods are abundant for those who can afford them.

One might ask if Rawlings hasn't made Ghana even more hostage to neocolonialism than it was under his predecessors. He calls his a common-sense revolution, and his Secretary of Finance, Kwesi Botchwey, has admitted: "We have had to make tactical compromises as conditions have dictated. . . . We are not talking about utopianism." Both cite as proof of Ghana's integrity the recent scuffle with the United States over spying by the Central Intelligence Agency and the mutual expulsion of diplomats, which led to the peevish elimination of U.S. aid to Ghana this year. Rawlings's leftist posture has blinded the Administration as much as Eyadema's seductions: Washington wants to know only if the Ghanaians are in America's camp or the Soviet Union's. But the reality renders the terms "socialist" and "capitalist" almost meaningless. Socialism bankrupted Ghana, and the P.N.D.C. has rejected Nkrumah's policies,

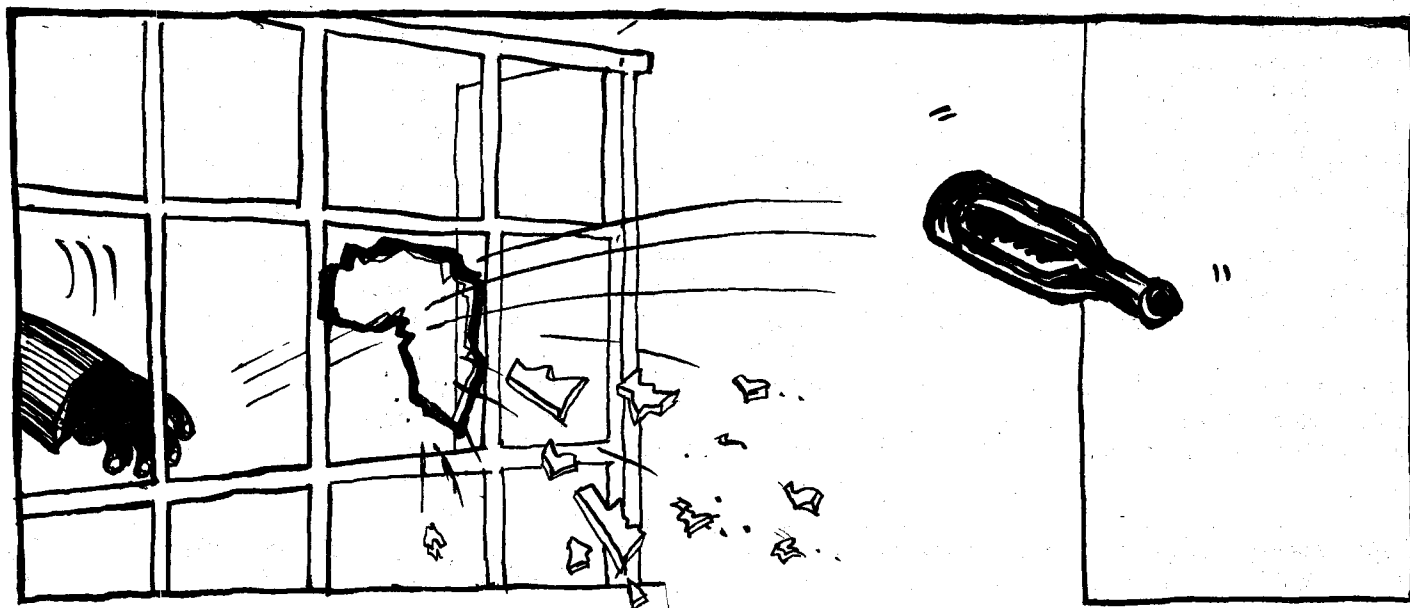
if not his rhetoric; capitalism in Togo means international banks and companies bailing out the debts of a corrupt elite.

For all the talk in periodicals on Africa about the Black Star shining again, euphoria was hardly the mood when I was in Ghana. It was something closer to a plucky will to survive. The daily wage can buy an egg now, but not a gallon of gasoline. Restaurants had full menus but no customers, and I saw scores of destitute people lying in the streets, too weak even to beg. Accra, unlike Lomé, doesn't have the will or money to hide its ugliness. Roads look as if they have been bombed, and splendid old buildings are decaying.

"Things are moving slowly," a Protestant minister told me. "Two years ago it was money chasing goods. Now goods chase money. The goods are there, but who can buy?" We were standing outside the state bus station trying to get seats from Accra to Lomé. A crowd had gathered, and our chances weren't good. The minister took me around to the side door of the ticket office, where we could bribe our way on the bus. "Not a bribe," he corrected me, implying that under the revolution the word, unlike the activity, is no longer permissible. "It's a tip: to insure promptness."

And in Togo, contrary to the country's public image, most people are neither the modern bourgeoisie of a Rothman's cigarette advertisement nor the supposedly authentic tribesmen of state-sponsored fetes; they have fallen into a chasm between the two ideals. They flock to the cities for scarce jobs, watch the price of corn soar and their own money dry up, dutifully applaud the regime and fear to complain. Students are quitting school in large numbers because there are no more civil-service jobs; teachers haven't seen a pay raise in four years.

The state urges Togolese living in the cities to return to farming but then creates obstacles. An agriculture teacher told me that although a functionary with connections can get a bank loan to purchase a taxi, a farmer who wishes to grow cacao is detoured with "complicated questions about land surveys and other things that they know he can't



answer, and is obliged to go home empty-handed." The rhetoric of unity raises a silent question: For whose good?

As though in answer, anonymous bombs have detonated in Lomé, giving an insidious kind of collective voice to the discontent. Last December 4 an explosion in the capital killed two people, the first deaths since the bombings began last August, in the wake of Pope John Paul II's visit. The government has responded in its fashion. University professors have been jailed for distributing dissident pamphlets; one man died in prison; an Amnesty International team was turned away at the airport. The bombs have even forced le Grand, as Eyadema is called, to take notice. His daily quotation in the newspaper now warns about the importance of *la sécurité*. A newspaper article in one of the tribal languages put it more bluntly:

Togolese brothers! Our enemies want to harm us even up to this moment. Don't sleep! From this event you can see the people want to destroy the peace we have. The peace comes from General Eyadema. But our enemies want to end it. Why? Are they citizens or foreigners? Wake up! Be vigilant night and day!

The government accuses Ghana of masterminding the bombings, but rumors abound in Lomé. It's the army; some of the soldiers have barely enough to eat. It's members of the President's entourage; after twenty years they are tired of Eyadema.

Clearly the people are tired. The Eyadema cult is still an accepted lie, but it is accepted with an ironic smile. "I've had dreams of him," a man confided to me. "Sometimes we are talking, sometimes fighting—I have cut his throat, and woken up feeling victorious. I used to think about struggle, but now I wonder what I can really do. I am prepared to live my life under that man."

"Whether they throw the bombs or not," said Anani Kesefia, "I'm not concerned." He is one of those living in the chasin. An educated man who has been out of work for two years, he has depended on the generosity of a younger brother to support his large family. "You may see what kind of dignity you carve for yourself then." A university graduate who has been forced to hustle work as a mason's helper and night watchman spoke to me of having "to abandon one personality for another."

Problems of unemployment and lack of money seem trivial next to the apocalyptic images in the media of African starvation and bloodshed. But a Ghanaian who's lost his job as a houseman in Lomé is probably more typical of the African experience today than the camps with thousands of refugees, and his dull, nagging bind is more likely to produce a political consciousness than ten years of famine. If the current economic and political disaster in Africa has achieved anything it has made people question the authority of their leaders. After years of decline, official reality is so irrelevant to the common misery that a kind of disgust has begun to replace indifference and fear. Dissident thoughts form because a regime's failures make any other kind ridiculous. And here Ghana and Togo differ. Ghanaians' opinions can slip out obliquely; in Togo they are snuffed out everywhere, except as bombs.

The contrast is most visible from signs and billboards. Street banners in Lomé bear the unmistakable tone of le Grand's authoritarian optimism: "The 4th All Africa Trade Fair—A Real Example of South-South Cooperation"; "Homage to the Politics of Peace and Stability of Presidents Mobutu and Eyadema"; even "African Peace and Unity Through Stamp-Exchanging." Ghana too is full of signs; they are seen on every taxi and in every street. "Solidarity in Labor for a Peaceful Development," two Accra workers were painting on a banner in honor of the revolution. A few blocks farther a different message appeared: "Change Ghana Through Jesus." And on a wood-carver's shop door, combining politics and religion: "Despite inflation, the wages of sin is still death." The country's three newspapers may recommend but not criticize; the Ghana Bar Association may call for the restoration of the 1979 Constitution by pointing out how that document is in accord with P.N.D.C. policy.

These appear to be false freedoms, but they are openings through which real freedoms have a chance to emerge. In Togo they are unthinkable. A word of criticism about any aspect of government there is subversion. "I will give you an example," a teacher told me. "The government insists that children come to school twice a day. All of us know that when they have to walk so many kilometers in the afternoon sun they can't learn at school. But if I went to the school inspector and proposed to him, 'Why not have them come once a day and spend more time here, then study at home?'—ah! I might lose my job."

He laughed, and then paused to sum up his thoughts. "You see, we will never develop without freedom. But freedom is impossible now, so we go on like this." □

■ AUTOMATION AND US

Where Will All The People Go?

ANNA SHAPIRO

For nearly ten years I have worked for a corporation known for its benevolent policies. In addition to maintaining a pension fund in which shares of its stock have been regularly deposited to my account, it has paid for prescriptions, routine visits to doctors and dentists, a bout of therapy; it has tripled the contributions I make to my high school and college; it has paid for dance classes, entry to myriad museums and the zoo it supports, and much of my tuition through graduate school. Most important, it has subsidized my life as a writer—as it has subsidized the lives of artists, musicians, actors, dancers and critics—in return for as little as five hours a week of proofreading.

Anna Shapiro is a writer and book reviewer who until January 31 spent Fridays proofreading at Fortune.

We are now being laid off. All of us. Our job category, in the language of our union, is being terminated. In the age of the paperless office there is nothing on which corrections are marked and therefore nothing for proofreaders to read. The editors have personal computers. As Ruth Etting used to sing, we're back in the cold again.

I do not voice this solely to make a personal complaint. The point of corporations is to make money, and we who are being laid off can all find work: other kinds of work, maybe better work, maybe work that doesn't pay so well or that has longer hours or that we find obnoxious, but work. This particular bunch, always overqualified, is unlikely to starve, collectively or singly. But the vanishing of our sinecure does cast light on aspects of automation and layoffs that heretofore had lain in the murk of this-happens-to-other-people-not-me.

The writing being on the wall, if not on paper, not just at my corporation or this particular part of it, but anywhere management can afford machines, I lightly said, Well, I guess I'll go back to doing layout and paste-up—the graphics department counterpart of this low-level white-collar work. But an acquaintance in the art department shook her head: no. She was going to be out of a job too, just as soon as the computer system that could replace her was installed. And in came one of the typesetters, or, as they are now known, page-coders. He was learning how to run the entire computer system because, of course, coders too would soon be a thing of the past. Editors would be able to tap in whatever was necessary without learning computer languages and elaborate keyboarding.

Where are we all to go? I don't mean just the people I work with, I mean most of us, generically, the bulk of the population. If nothing but managerial positions are left, and not many of those, what happens to this great mass of unemployed people, not just in publishing but—apply the lesson—everywhere? Computers and automation are climbing up the job scale, lopping off jobs at higher and higher levels. I am not worrying about where the human element will go; I'm worrying about where the humans will go.

Some people can find work building computers, running them, selling them and keeping them going, but that will still leave (and already has left) a lot of people with nothing to do, however ready, willing and able they are. Will we have to depend on various forms of unemployment and welfare? Will we devise intricate systems of job-sharing in which the workweek will be a mere five hours? That's fine for those with other work to do, but an invitation to malaise, at least, for many. Will wages radically drop to a point where people are cheaper than machines again?

Machines don't eat, they don't need much in the way of shelter and they never go to the movies. Workers do, and the money to do these things will still have to come from somewhere. Even if it's "public" money, won't it have to come, in the form of taxes or unemployment insurance payments, from the same companies that are laying people off? So that the companies might as well pay the recipients directly, for work? (Although, it can be argued, at least a

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REFLECTIONS ON A GLASS HOUSE:

THE U.N. AT 40

In this September 21, 1985, Nation Special Issue, nine scholars and activists assess the U.N.'s achievements and failures. They analyze the history of U.S. participation in the United Nations and examine the organization's role in disarmament, Middle East negotiations and in relations between the developed countries and the Third World. The issue, marking the U.N.'s fortieth birthday, serves as a much-needed rebuttal to the arguments of U.N. opponents. \$3 each, \$2 each for orders of 10 or more. Send check or money order, payable to The Nation, to The U.N. Issue, The Nation, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

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heavy bureaucracy assures jobs to those who process the taxes and insurance.)

In the short term, yes, layoffs mean profits. But for corporations it's a rigged race, if a very long one, that they have no hope of winning. Or, to switch metaphors, if the buck stops, the disaster is universal. □

Mr. Iacocca

(Continued From Front Cover)

who also sat on the foundation board, that "at the chairman's direction," they could no longer serve on both bodies. The two were given the choice of resigning from one post. Upon learning about that order, Hodel informed Iacocca that he too was barred from crossover membership, and asked him to resign as chair of the commission. The Chrysler boss refused, so Hodel fired him.

Iacocca was probably right when he charged that his ouster had less to do with potential conflicts of interest than with the four-year dispute over the future of Ellis Island. The Interior Department, paralyzed by the Iacocca legend, never challenged him as he ran roughshod over the process of public-private cooperation that had been the heart of the restoration project. Concern over the government's abdication of responsibility was first expressed last June, at a hearing before Representative Bruce Vento's Subcommittee on National Parks and Recreation. The Interior Department has not emerged from this dispute covered with glory. The firing was heavy-handed. Nevertheless, Iacocca's rebuttal had only the most remote relationship to the truth.

Iacocca left the impression, eagerly pounced on by much of the press, that Hodel's decision was politically motivated. The story was played either as an attempt to sidetrack Iacocca's rumored Presidential ambitions or as an act of revenge by Donald Regan for critical remarks Iacocca made about him in his best-selling autobiography. Iacocca also falsely portrayed himself as the protector of the environment and the defender of the little people against Park Service plans to exploit both. In fact, a struggle between Iacocca and the Park Service has raged for four years as Iacocca has insisted on a plan that would demolish two-thirds of Ellis Island's structures. Because the future of Ellis Island is still at stake, we think it necessary to consider Iacocca's assertions one by one.

"I will oppose any effort to commercialize this restoration project—and that includes any plans to build a luxury hotel and conference center on [Ellis] Island and finance it through the sale of tax shelters to the rich. . . . There's a couple of people who want a flashing Sheraton sign; we finally kicked that out of there. . . . I didn't buy [Ellis Island], and I didn't bomb it—I built it."

"He should know commercialization when he sees it," a

Roberta Brandes Gratz, an expert on preservation issues, is completing a book on urban redevelopment. Eric Fettesmann is assistant city editor for the New York Post.

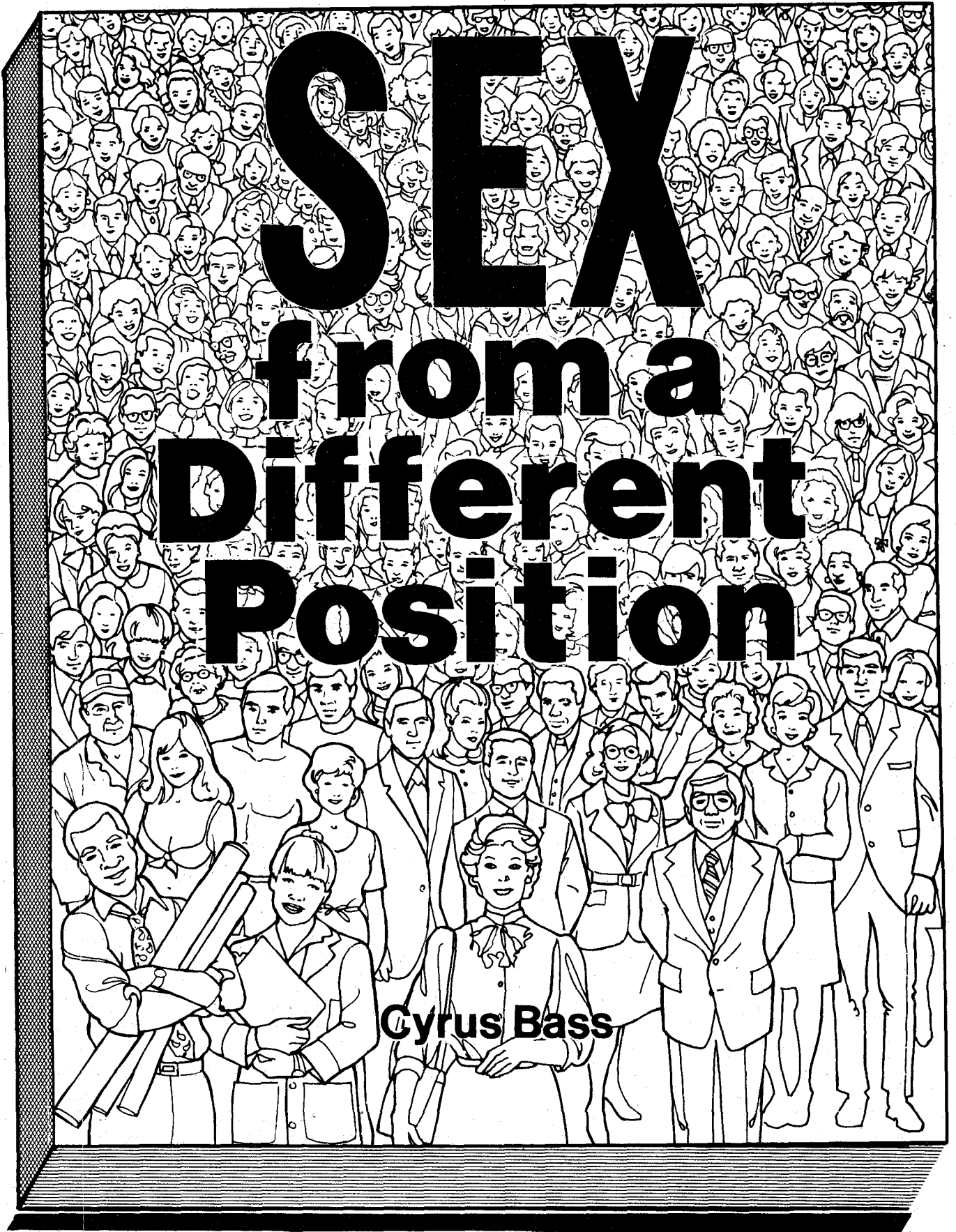
Park Service official said after hearing Iacocca. Our first article detailed the blatant commercialization of Iacocca's fund-raising process: the franchising of Miss Liberty to corporate interests and the marketing of such tasteful and appropriate items as official Statue of Liberty air fresheners, popcorn bags, beer mugs and swizzle sticks. *The Wall Street Journal* reported recently that a foundation licensee is offering "commemorative Ellis Island urinals." As that newspaper noted dryly, only Iacocca "could convince 90 [corporate] officers that the Statue of Liberty belongs only to them." Iacocca's foundation regarded this campaign as a "monumental profit opportunity," to quote one of its advertisements. John Morrissey, the foundation's first chair, has admitted that he told potential corporate sponsors, "I'm here to make you a lot of money and get some of it back for ourselves."

As for a luxury hotel on Ellis Island, plans to build it were scrapped more than a year ago. William Hubbard, whose nonprofit Center for Housing Partnerships developed the conference center proposal, says he met most of Iacocca's objections back in 1984. The center would be run by Rutgers University and the State University of New York and would house archives and a training center of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. "One of the reasons we accepted the proposal was that it protected the architectural balance of the island," preserving all the historic buildings, said deputy Park Service director Dennis Galvin. Revenue from the center would pay the island's running expenses, including \$2 million a year for water and electricity alone. Hubbard has also suggested that public contributions replace the original financing plan, involving private investment, bank loans and a Federal grant. Finally, there was never going to be a flashing Sheraton sign on Ellis (the company was involved in the early stages of the project but has since withdrawn); although on Liberty Island, Iacocca has approved a permanent Kodak exhibit, complete with logo. Some people may think that a conference center is inappropriate for Ellis Island; the point is that the planning should be carried out in public, not by a secretive private foundation. At any rate Hubbard's plan for restoring the island is a far cry from Iacocca's.

"There are two sides: one side says 'Raze all those buildings,' and 'They're not historic.' . . . John Burgee was not hired by the foundation. . . . Mr. Burgee, working pro bono—that means for nothing—is treated like chopped liver. He, along with Philip Johnson, is the leading architect in the entire world."

Again Iacocca misstates the facts. Far from protecting the island's historical integrity, he and his favored architect, Burgee, would like to demolish twenty-two of Ellis Island's thirty-three historic structures. With Iacocca's full support, Burgee would erect a vaguely defined "ethnic Williamsburg," complete with crafts fairs and food stalls. "Why would anybody want to take a boat from Manhattan out to Ellis Island for ethnic food?" asked Galvin. "Manhattan is an ethnic food festival—and an ethnic celebration, I might add."

Burgee was an incorporating director of the foundation.



SEX **from a** **Different** **Position**

Cyrus Bass

Politics From A Different Position

THE FOUNTAIN OF BLOOD

In the center of the City of Mashhad, Iran, there stands a fountain that gushes blood. Not far from Tehran, in the cemetery called Behesht-e-Zahra, there also stands a fountain that gushes blood. Smaller fountains have been built across this sprawling cemetery and these, too, gush blood. The blood is of those who died fighting the Shah and those who were killed by the Iraqis in their war against Iran. Iranians regularly visit these fountains to dip their hands or parts of their garments into the blood. By this act they become sanctified and their ascension to heaven is thereby secured. Those who worship Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful, believe that the souls of those who die fighting for Him immediately enter heaven.

Of course, the liquid which gushes from those fountains is not human blood. It is thick red colored water made to simulate human blood. The Iranians are forced to resort to simulation because to date they do not have enough human blood to feed these fountains. The blame for this deficiency could be placed upon the shoulders of the Israelis. How did that come about?

In 1981 the French agreed to build a nuclear reactor for Iraq. The French explained that the reactor would be used only for peaceful purposes. How the French would know in advance the way the Iraqis would use their reactor they did not explain. The Israelis, who are less than thirty minutes by air away from Iraq, were not convinced. So on June 7 of that year the Israelis sent over eight bomber and six fighter planes and completely knocked out the nuclear reactor.

Had the Israelis not knocked out the reactor the Iraqis would now have the bombs to give Iran enough human blood to feed their fountains.

Many nations of the world, including our country, condemned the Israelis for knocking out the nuclear reactor. The experts explained that the action was in violation of international law. The Israelis were not impressed. After Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen, Treblinka, the Israelis discovered another law, a law more universal than international law, the law known as self-defense.

Experts, by definition, have a limited field of vision, the parameter of their expertise. One might say, therefore, that they suffer from cortical myopia. By charging the Israelis with violating international law, they, because of their myopia, failed to see the existence of another body of laws: the body of laws known as the laws of belligerency.

On May 15, 1948, a day after Israel became a State,

the armies of Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Transjordan, and Egypt attacked the new State. These armies were fully equipped with artillery, tanks, armored cars, personnel carriers, machine guns, mortars. Egypt, Iraq, and Syria had air forces and, of course, used them. Iraq was the only nation of those who attacked Israel who refused to negotiate the cease-fire of June and July 1948.

In the 1967 war against Israel, Iraq together with Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Saudi Arabia attacked Israel. At that time (May 31, 1967) President Aref of Iraq said, "The existence of Israel is an error which must be rectified. This is our opportunity to wipe out the ignominy which has been with us since 1948. Our goal is clear — to wipe Israel off the map." Iraq did not agree to the cease-fire of that war. To date no agreement of any kind pertaining to the cessation of hostilities between Iraq and Israel has been negotiated. Iraq has been and continues to be hostile toward Israel. She is, therefore, in a continuous state of war against Israel. Israel, therefore, has the right by the rules of belligerency to take any measure of protection when she feels her security is endangered.

The authority for the creation of the fountains of blood is the Ayatollah (the Gift of God) Ruhollah Khomeini. He is the supreme leader of the Iranian people. To Khomeini the world is divided into two forces, the force of good and the force of evil. The force of good is represented by Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful; the force of evil is represented by the Devil. This is what he teaches his followers. His followers exist all over the world, the greatest number of them being in Iran. To Khomeini the two most powerful agents of the Devil are the United States and the Soviet Union, with Israel holding the position of the little devil, and is viewed as an appendage of the United States. Khomeini's goal in life is to destroy the three devils, the little one first because it would be the easiest goal to achieve for the obvious reasons that it is the closest, the smallest and the most vulnerable. Once that is accomplished then comes the ultimate goal and when that is achieved Khomeini would enter heaven as the peer of Mohammed. He is not concerned about the possibility that he might not live to see the achievement of his goals. He knows that his successors would carry on after him. He knows they would because they must. They would not betray him because heaven would damn them if they did. No ayatollah ever would be able to carry the weight of such guilt.

Many people of the West look upon Khomeini as a religious fanatic. Those who do have either forgotten

CYRUS BASS

Sex From A Different Position

CYRUS BASS

the lessons of history or have not learned them. Khomeini is not a fanatic, religious or otherwise. Khomeini is an anachronism. He is a person out of the first millennium, the period when his thoughts and beliefs were the realities of the times. One reason why he has so large a following is the fact that most people in the world are anachronisms. Khomeini is a person of tremendous capabilities, a born leader and an effective administrator who possesses a miasma of charismatic powers. His influence will increase and so will the number of his followers, especially after he is dead.

His followers have learned that it is all right to do business with agents of the Devil so long as the agents give them what they want. What they want is twentieth century technology, especially that which relates to the production of sophisticated instruments of destruction. Their ultimate goal is to be able to produce the ultimate weapon of destruction. In the meantime they continue to organize to spread the gospel. In their aim to serve Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful, they use every opportunity, at any time, any place, with whatever means to kill agents of the Devil.

Is time on the side of Khomeini? Is history on the side of Khomeini? Who in the world on the morning of September 18, 1931 when Japan attacked Manchuria knew that it would eventually lead to Pearl Harbor and Hiroshima? Who in the world knew that the beer hall *Putsch* of November 1923 would lead to the Holocaust? Who in the world knew that the meeting at Geneva on July 21, 1954 when Vietnam was divided into a North and South Vietnam that it would lead to our country's worst tragedy?

While the United States and the Soviet Union are engaged in their perennial pathogenic quarrel about who has more nuclear warheads, they are at the same time seeking to make more friends for their respective causes. Among the nations whose friendship they seek with abandon are those who worship Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful. The way they seek to obtain that friendship is to provide them with sophisticated instruments of destruction and the technology of the twentieth century. Eventually these nations will acquire that knowledge and with that knowledge they will be able to produce the means with which to construct the fountain of blood of all mankind.



If you find **POLITICS FROM A DIFFERENT POSITION** interesting, you will find **SEX FROM A DIFFERENT POSITION** more interesting.

SEX FROM A DIFFERENT POSITION by Cyrus Bass is a most unusual book unique in publishing history. The title is eisegetical. It immediately makes one think of pornography. But the book is everything *except* that. The book is about sex but it is not a sex book by any means. It is a book about human life: the way we think, the way we behave, the way we love and hate, the way we build and destroy and it explains the whys—the whys we love, hate, kill, have wars. The explanations are different from what has been written about human behavior by others. Why then the title? The author wants to demonstrate that when we hear the word sex immediately most of us think of the physical act. But the book is not about sex in the physical sense. The book is literally about sex from a different position.

The author, a practicing clinical psychologist for many years, charts an orientation on how to live in health and happiness which is fundamentally different from what we have been led to believe about sickness and health. His theories about illness in general and about cancer and schizophrenia in particular, if proven to be correct, may well revolutionize the practice of medicine. Dr. Bass is not an eclectic, not a traditionalist. The book is not a compendium of what experts say. There are no footnotes. His writing on medicine, psychology, religion, politics, law, must be read.

The adjacent article which is *not* part of the book illustrates the style and scope of his writings.

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He quit early on but was soon hired—Iacocca's denial notwithstanding—as its project architect. Professionally, he is best known for designing corporate skyscrapers, and he told us he has “never restored anything.” Hubbard's plan was designed by a firm one of whose partners is a past vice-chair of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission. (As we were going to press, Burgee announced his resignation from the project to protest Iacocca's firing.)

“I set up two fantastic committees of the commission, architecture and finance, and they are going to try and decide what's available to us. . . . General Westmoreland is on them, and others—[Eugene] Bay from Field and Stream. We have experts from all over. [But] the Park Service has already said that they don't want to go through that rigmarole.”

In December 1984, after nearly three years of debate, the experts on the commission's architecture and preservation committees unanimously approved a compromise plan for Ellis Island, including Hubbard's modified conference center, and instructed Iacocca to present it to the full commission for recommendation to Secretary Hodel. Iacocca refused, and at last November's commission meeting he announced that he was going back to square one, setting up new committees to re-evaluate every Ellis Island proposal. No wonder the Park Service doesn't want “to go through that rigmarole”; it's been going through it since 1982. Iacocca just wants to repeat the process until his plan is approved. As he stated, the new committees no longer include the experts who blocked Iacocca and Burgee's demolition plan. Iacocca's idea of experts include people like General Westmoreland, the publisher of *Field and Stream* and assorted corporate executives who have been marketing Miss Liberty. Just how has the emphasis changed? The first time around, the two key committees covered architecture and preservation. There's still an architecture committee, but preservation has been shoved aside to make way for “finance.”

“Mr. Secretary, if the foundation's where the action is and the commission is a ‘nothing’—as you keep saying—why are

you so anxious to have me off that ‘nothing’ commission?”

If Hodel ever said the commission was nothing, he was only paraphrasing Iacocca's own public statements. Iacocca admitted to *The New York Times* last fall that he found the commission setup “unwieldy” and decided to shift the balance of power to the foundation, which he controlled and which was not subject to Interior Department jurisdiction.

“The original commission charter . . . states that the foundation, the private fund-raising arm, must have membership on the commission—which is the advisory body to the secretary—at all times.”

The commission charter also says that “the commission will meet quarterly.” Prior to last November the commission had not met in two and a half years.

“The meetings are called by the secretary. I didn't think I had time to call them. I had a statue to build. . . . It has to be done by July 4th. That date is inviolate.”

The charter says nothing about the secretary calling meetings. In any case Iacocca immediately contradicted himself by saying he had no time to call them. As already noted, it was Iacocca himself who tried to ignore the commission. As for the July 4 date, it is far from inviolable. The foundation's publicity has tried to give the impression that July 4 marks Miss Liberty's one-hundredth birthday. Actually the statue's anniversary is October 28. But then accuracy has never been one of Iacocca's priorities.

“Former Interior Secretary Clark specifically requested that I add the job of foundation chairman in order to clear up public confusion and establish ‘accountability.’ . . . Nobody knew there were two of those things, and they still don't know it.”

In asking Iacocca to become foundation chair in September 1984, Clark simply wanted the Chrysler chief to formalize an arrangement that had existed from day one. Incorporating director John Morrissey headed the advertising agency that holds Chrysler's account and is one of Iacocca's closest advisers. Executive director Paul Bergmoser is a retired president of Chrysler. When the foundation worried about conflicts of interest on the part of corporate marketer Richard Rovsek, who was eventually relieved of his public relations and licensing duties, Iacocca asked Chrysler's general counsel to investigate. Foundation personnel reported to Iacocca long before he was formally named as chair.

In fact, foundation officials deliberately tried to blur the two bodies' identities. Although prohibited by the Interior Department from having any connection with each other, they used the same stationery (Iacocca wrote his letters to Hodel on it). Burgee told us that he treated the two bodies “sort of interchangeably.” The foundation's official Statue of Liberty book doesn't even mention the commission's existence.

“Our [foundation] vice chairman, Mr. Bergmoser, . . . felt that two members were not pulling their load and should get

THE SELLING OF MISS LIBERTY

The November 9 Nation reveals how major corporations, under the direction of Lee Iacocca, have taken over the statue restoration for their own publicity and profit and excluded the American public. \$3 each. Special discount on bulk sales (through 3/21) 10-49 copies \$1.50 each, 50-99 \$1.25 each, 100 or more \$1 each. Prepayment required. Send order to Miss Liberty, The Nation, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.



off one or the other [body]. . . . I was trying to put these guys to work."

The idlers Iacocca was referring to were J.J. Simmons, a former Under Secretary of the Interior, and Armen Avedisian, a retired construction executive and one of the twenty-one original commission members appointed in 1982. Yet Hodel named Avedisian to succeed Iacocca as commission chair. Just moments after repeating without comment Bergmoser's complaint that Avedisian wasn't "pulling his load," Iacocca said, "Armen Avedisian is a very good personal friend of mine. If I were going to get bounced, I would probably have to go with him as [my choice for] chairman." Iacocca's lavish praise of the man whom Bergmoser had complained about was easily the most mysterious statement of the day.

"They suddenly dismissed Eastin and Horn last week [February 6]. They had [Interior Department] people on [the foundation board]. That's part of the memo of understanding. That's in a Federal advisory act. That cannot be circumvented."

Iacocca was talking about Interior Department officials Keith Eastin and William Horn, who were removed by Hodel from the foundation board, where they had been allowed to vote, in violation of the foundation's memorandum of agreement. That memorandum, which is not a Federal advisory act, is the only document relevant to their participation, and it specifies that they were to be nonvoting members. As we reported, Eastin, in a blatant conflict of interest, initiated Park Service policy changes that directly benefited the foundation and barred outside fund-raising groups and businesses from contributing money directly to the Park Service.

"The G.A.O. just gave us a clean bill of health, by the way."

The General Accounting Office began an intensive audit of the foundation, the first time in its four-year history, last June 28. Its investigation is still incomplete, officials say, so

no one has been given any bill of health just yet. Our sources tell us that the G.A.O.'s report will be critical of the foundation's operations, concluding that the restoration "has succeeded in spite of itself."

"We said early on, maybe people just didn't hear us, that Liberty Island takes only \$65 million of the \$265 million."

If Iacocca ever said that the statue's renovation was the lesser of the two projects, even his own people weren't listening. The foundation always relegated Ellis Island to the fine print in its ads. This decision was calculated; almost everyone connected with the project was convinced that only appeals to save the statue could draw the many millions of dollars needed to pay for the restoration. At least Iacocca finally admitted that the project is over its initial \$230 million budget, the point we made last year.

"How that money is spent is far more important than how it was raised. It was, as [Treasury] Secretary [James] Baker said, 'classic American volunteerism' . . . that raised those unprecedented funds."

Iacocca contradicts himself to fit the situation. Last fall, while striking the first souvenir Statue of Liberty coin, Iacocca said of his fund-raising, "The process is just as important as the result." As we pointed out, the lion's share of the money raised came from lucrative corporate sponsorships, product tie-ins and government-produced coins.

Ultimately, the saddest part of the whole restoration campaign is that Lee Iacocca ended up confusing himself with the nation's most precious monuments. He repeatedly claimed at his press conference that he had "built" both the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island. Solemnly labeling his firing "un-American," Iacocca declared, "I know who sent in the money we raised, and I know who they sent it to—and it was not Secretary Hodel." But as Dennis Galvin of the Park Service points out: "What has raised the money is the power of these areas as symbols to the American people, not the Park Service and not the charisma of Lee Iacocca. It's important to remember that." □



BOOKS & THE ARTS.

Tough Puppies

MICHAEL MALONE

America at its saddest and dangerously silliest has the adolescent soul of a grade-B cowboy movie—violent and sentimental, morally and mentally simplistic. No doubt that's why a grade-B movie star still sits tall in the saddle of the Oval Office, sometimes quoting Dirty Harry and sometimes teary poems. And no doubt that's why the four Young Adult novels of S.E. Hinton have sold millions of copies and have made their rough-tender way into successful Hollywood movies, usually starring Matt Dillon, one of teen-age America's heartthrobs. The novels—*The Outsiders*; *That Was Then, This is Now*; *Rumble Fish*; and *Tex* (Dell)—are touted on their covers as heroic tales of "the young and the restless," as "strikingly realistic portraits of modern kids trying to make it in a rough world." S.E. Hinton is the nom de plume of an Oklahoma woman, Susan Eloise Hinton, who publishes under her gender-anonymous initials because her books are first-person narrations of male teen-agers and, according to librarians, are read mostly by sixth- to eighth-grade boys. M.E. Kerr, another popular young adult novelist, uses the same strategy.

Hinton was 17 when she wrote *The Outsiders*, and the characters, she says, were "loosely based" on people she knew. "When I was growing up, most of my close friends were boys," she remarked in an interview in *The New York Times*. "In those days girls were mainly concerned about getting their hair done and lining their eyes. It was such a passive society. Girls got their status from their boyfriends. They weren't interested in doing anything on their own." They certainly don't do anything on their own in Hinton's books—indeed they scarcely put in an appearance, although the male narrators frequently comment on how nice their hair looks. Nor are adults much in evidence. In this world the stories, like the streets, belong almost exclusively to tribes of adolescent males, to accounts

of their tender camaraderie, reckless rebellion, macho warfare and often tragic fates.

It is difficult, if not horrifying, to think that the millions of 12-year-olds reading these "strikingly realistic portraits of modern kids" find any more in them than the most remote connections to their own lives, for Hinton's boys are usually impoverished, are often thugs and thieves, are variously abandoned by parents, brutalized by policemen, jailed, stabbed to death, shot to death, burned to death and so routinely beaten nearly to death that they think it's a drag to have to rush to the hospital for something as trivial as a fractured skull. When his chest is cut so deeply in a gang fight that he can see "white bone gleaming through," Rusty-James of *Rumble Fish* grits his teeth ("Ain't all that bad") while his brother douses whiskey on the wound ("He's been hurt worse than this"). These are "lean hard" "tough as nails"—or rather "tuff" as nails—"cool" 14-year-olds. Misery, lawlessness and violence are served up matter-of-factly to palates presumably so jaded by screen violence that it seems there are no squeamish stomachs left among the prepubescent. "The Dingo is a pretty rough hangout; there's always a fight going on there and once a girl got shot" (*The Outsiders*). "The last guy who was killed in the gangfights was a Packer. He had been fifteen" (*Rumble Fish*). Bryon, narrator of *That Was Then, This is Now*, comments blandly: "We fought with chains and we fought Socs and we fought other grease gangs. It was a normal childhood. . . . So that was how we lived, stealing stuff and selling stuff." Other boyish pastimes mentioned are drunken poker games, car theft, drag racing, pool hustling and "jumping hippies and blacks." The horrendous life of Bryon's former girlfriend is summed up in a paragraph and dismissed as nothing unusual: "Her husband didn't have a job, her brothers were both in jail, her old man was drunk all the time, and her father-in-law was always slapping her bottom. . . . They weren't so different from most of the families in our neighborhood."

Tragedy is parenthetical, introduced in a dependent clause: "Since Mom and Dad were killed in an auto wreck . . ."

(*The Outsiders*). Even in *Tex*, the most recent, the least riddled with gang romance and the best of the books, Tex (a pleasant fellow, given to believable classroom pranks and adolescent worries) is forced at gunpoint to drive an escaped killer to the state line. He rolls the truck into a ditch, enabling the pursuing police to blow the young convict away in a barrage of crossfire. Only a week or so later, Tex himself is critically shot in the stomach while accompanying a friend on a drug deal. Tex has only gone along for the ride because he's upset. He's upset because his brother has just blurted out that their Pop is not really Tex's father; his real father was a no-good rodeo cowboy with whom Mom had a one-night stand to spite Pop when he was in prison for bootlegging.

In *That Was Then, This is Now* "golden dangerous Mark," the narrator's best buddy, also discovers that he is mistaken about his parentage—his real father turns out to be another rodeo cowboy. Bryon tells us about it like this: "Mark had lived at my house ever since I was ten and he was nine and his parents shot each other in a drunken argument." Later we learn the argument was over Mark's parentage; the shots were fatal, and the child, hiding under the porch, heard it all. As Mark recalls: "And then they start yelling and I hear this sound like a couple of firecrackers. And I think, well, I can go live with Bryon and his old lady. . . . I didn't like livin' at home." The desire to leave home is a sentiment with which most teen-agers can empathize, but few are given so graphic an opportunity to do so. Nor do the majority, I hope, respond to family indifference like Dallas Winston of *The Outsiders*, who "lied, cheated, stole, rolled drunks, jumped small kids," even if they occasionally feel the same way about their parents: "What do they matter? Shoot, my old man don't give a hang whether I'm in jail or dead in a car wreck or drunk in the gutter. That don't bother me none."

What is clear from the recurrent themes of Hinton's novels, like the discovery of mysterious parentage, is that despite their modern, colloquial tone, they are fairy tale adventures (Luke Skywalker's father is really Darth Vader), and their rumbles as exotic as jousts in *Ivanhoe* or pirate wars in *Treasure Island*. What is curious is that grown-ups insist on the books' veracity. Hinton announces, "The

Michael Malone's new novel, *Handling Sin*, will be published by Little, Brown in April.

real boy like Dallas Winston [the role Matt Dillon plays in *The Outsiders*] was shot and killed by the police for having stolen a car." Tim Hunter, director of the film *Tex*, says he was drawn to Hinton's work because of the way she weaves social problems "into the fabric of a realistic story."

In fact, the fabric is mythic. There are no verisimilar settings. Presumably the books take place near Tulsa, Oklahoma (the films do), but place names are never mentioned, and were it not for occasional references to rodeos, one would have little notion of the Western ambience so evident in the movie versions. Characters live in "the neighborhood"; sometimes they go to "the city" or to "the country." The city is bacchanalian: "There were lots of people and noise and lights and you could feel energy coming off things, even buildings" (*Rumble Fish*). The country is pastoral: "The clouds were pink and meadowlarks were singing" (*The Outsiders*). Temporal location is equally vague. *The Outsiders*, published in 1967, might as easily have been written ten years earlier, in the fifties of its real progenitor, James Dean movies. True, some parenthetical hippies are up to some druggy no-good in *That Was Then, This Is Now* (1971), but the Motorcycle Boy in *Rumble Fish* (1975) might have ridden right off the screen of *The Wild One*. Far from strikingly realistic in literary form, these novels are romances, mythologizing the tragic beauty of violent youth, as the flashy surrealism of Francis Ford Coppola's *Rumble Fish*, with its film noir symbolism and spooky soundtrack, all too reverently attests.

Moreover, while praised for its "lean Hemingway style" and natural dialogue, Hinton's prose can be as fervid, mawkish and ornate as any nineteenth-century romance, although this is less true in the later books, especially *Tex*. The heightened language of her young narrators intensifies the glamour and sentiment of their stories, but it will not strike readers as everyday school-locker lingo. Ponyboy, 14, and Bryon, 16, fling adjectives and archaic phrases ("Hence his name," "Heaven forbid") around like Barbara Cartland. Bryon notes that his friend Mark's "strangely sinister innocence was gone." Ponyboy describes his brother, Sodapop, as having "a finely drawn, sensitive face that somehow manages to be reckless and thoughtful at the same time," as well as "lively,

dancing, recklessly laughing eyes." Ponyboy is also given to quoting from memory long snatches of Robert Frost's "Nothing Gold Can Stay," and to using words like "merrily," "gallant" and "elfish." Of course, Bryon and Ponyboy point out to us that although they seem to spend all their time hanging out with the gang, they are both honor students: "I make good grades and have a high IQ." But even Rusty-James of *Rumble Fish*, stuck in "dumb classes" and, by his own admission, no student ("Math ain't never been my strong point"), waxes poetical: "I wouldn't have her to hold anymore, soft but strong in my arms." Sententious moralizing coats the pages: "That was what he wanted. For somebody to tell him 'No.' . . . If his old man had just belted him—just once, he might still be alive." "You start wondering why, and you get old." "We see the same sunset."

The lyricism, the lack of novelistic detail, the static iconography of Hinton's books keep the clutter of creation from interfering with the sources of their obviously persistent appeal—their rapid action (mostly violent) unfettered by the demands of a plot, their intense emotions (mostly heavy) and their clear-cut moral maps. Hinton's fictional universe is as black-and-white as an old cowboy film. *The Outsiders* is the ur-text. In it there are Socs (Socials) and there are greasers; unlike that of the warring Hatfields and McCoys, Montagues and Capulets, Jets and Sharks, this eternal enmity is neither familial nor racial, but financial. Socs are rich, greasers are poor; Socs are "the in crowd," greasers are "the outsiders." Socs always wear madras and English Leather and drive Mustangs or Corvairs. They always "jump greasers and wreck houses and throw beerblasts for kicks." That's pretty much all we get to know about Socs; they're just the enemy. A Soc girl, Cherry Valance, makes a brief appearance to point out to Ponyboy, "We have troubles you never even heard of," but those troubles are not explored; instead she schematizes neatly: "You greasers have a different set of values. You're more emotional. We're sophisticated—cool to the point of not feeling anything." Given this fundamental difference (and despite the fact that they see the same sunset), Cherry is obliged to warn Ponyboy: "If I see you in the hall . . . and don't say hi, well, it's not personal. . . . We couldn't let our parents see us with you all."



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Our heroes, greasers, are also initially defined by their appearance and their style of antisocial behavior: "We steal things and drive old souped-up cars and hold up gas stations once in a while . . . just like we leave our shirt-tails out and wear leather jackets." But popular culture has taught us to interpret this style with sympathy, if not rabid infatuation. The narrators pay continual, indeed obsessive, attention to their own and their friends' appearance. We hear constantly about "strange golden eyes," "light-brown, almost-red hair," faces like "some Greek god come to earth." They are always asking and reassuring each other about their good looks, particularly the beauty of their hair.

Funky costume and flamboyant hairstyle have long been the outward signs of inward romantic rebellion—from Shelley's flowing locks and open collars through Ginsberg's sandals to Elvis's sideburns—and Ponyboy's identifying himself through his hair oil ("I am a greaser") announces his place in a tradition that goes back to Brontë's crush on Heathcliff, and associates him with such suffering gods as James Dean. It's significant that many of the young men who played in Coppola's 1982 film of *The Outsiders* were to become adolescent idols within the next few years: Dillon, Rob Lowe, Tom Cruise, Emilio Estevez, Patrick Swayze. A leather jacket, bloody knuckles and a sensitive soul is an irresistible combination. Pain and sadness help too.

There is no sweeter sorrow than the self-pity of our teens, no pain more rhapsodized than our adolescent anguish; adults simply lose the will to sustain such *Sturm und Drang*. Like the protagonists of all *Bildungsromans*, Hinton's leather-jacketed young Werthers are lyrical on the subject of their psychic aches and pains. Tough as nails on the street, yeah, hey—but alone in the dark, they're as naked and afraid in a world they never made as any Herman Hesse hero. Confused, lonely, slighted, they share with, they feel for, their readers that most profound pubescent emotion: "I don't belong." In the classic apprenticeship novel, the youngster—Tonio Kröger, Stephen Dedalus, Paul Morel, Eugene Gant—experiences and reflects on this sense of alienation and so grows to understand the particular difference that is his self. When, in *The Outsiders*, Ponyboy tells us, "I cried passionately, 'It ain't fair that we have all the rough

breaks,'" his *cri de coeur*, like the novel's title, suggests the tribal rather than personal thrust of Hinton's use of the theme, as well as its simplistic economic nature. ("You can't win because they've got all the breaks.") In Hinton's books, selfhood is subsumed in the tribal gang. "It was great, we were a bunch of people making up one big person" (*That Was Then, This Is Now*). "Why did the Socs hate us so much? We left them alone." "It wasn't fair for the Socs to have everything. We were as good as they were" (*The Outsiders*). So magically does the gang incorporate its members that in the opening of *The Outsiders* it miraculously appears out of the night to save Ponyboy from the motiveless malignity of a carful of Socs: "All the noise I had heard was the gang coming to rescue me." "Somehow the gang sensed what had happened."

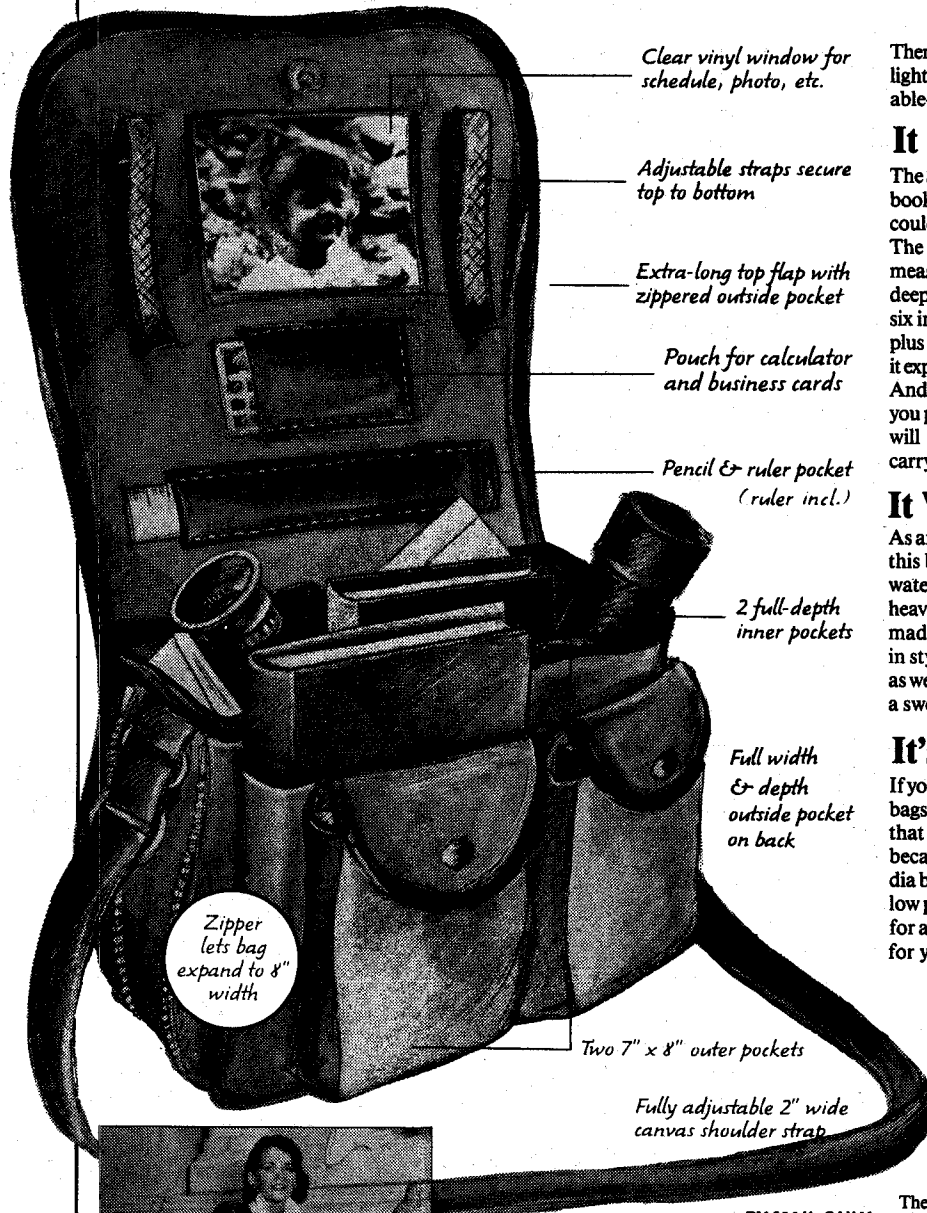
The gang is the family: "We're almost as close as brothers." And in contrast to "a snarling, distrustful, bickering pack like the Socs," greaser gangs are unfailingly loyal and free of rivalry. Maybe they have "too much energy, too much feeling, with no way to blow it off" except through marauding violence, but with one another they are as gentle as maidens on a Victorian valentine, innocently sleeping with their arms around each other, choking with tenderness for one another's pain. Johnny in *The Outsiders* is the most vulnerable, most pathetically hurt gang member (the Sal Mineo part in *Rebel Without a Cause*; for his film of *The Outsiders*, Coppola even found in Ralph Macchio an actor who looks just like Mineo). Ponyboy's solicitude for him is shared by even the toughest of the greasers. He is "a little dark puppy that has been kicked too many times and is lost in a crowd of strangers. . . . His father was always beating him up, and his mother ignored him. . . . If it hadn't been for the gang, Johnny would never have known what love and affection are." Like Mineo's Plato, Johnnycake is clearly pegged for fearful sacrifice. And sure enough—having accidentally stabbed a Soc to death and then redeemed himself by saving some children from a burning church—he dies from burns and a broken back after a series of heart-rending hospital-bed scenes. As might be expected in fiction for adolescents, the blood brother bond supersedes all other emotional commit-

ments. *That Was Then, This Is Now* opens, "Mark and me went down to the bar"; and Bryon's love for Mark, like the love of Beowulf or Roland for their companions, runs like a lyric refrain through the novel.

These characters do sometimes have girlfriends, but their erotic relationships come nowhere near the power of male camaraderie. Hinton reports she almost didn't agree to sell *Tex* to Walt Disney Productions because she "thought they'd really sugar it up, take out all the sex, drugs and violence," but there is actually far less sex in her books than in the films made from them. Her instinct, conscious or not, that young readers could take endless physical violence and heartbreak but would be embarrassed by physical passion is quite sound. On the page of *Rumble Fish*, Rusty-James tells us of his visit to Patty, "I just sat there holding her and sometimes kissed the top of her head"; on the screen this becomes a torrid tumble on a couch. Rusty-James's description, "There were some girls [at the lake] and we built a fire and went swimming," becomes on screen an orgiastic montage of naked bodies. Similarly, unlike the films, the books are as free of profanity as *Heidi*. We are told people "talk awful dirty," but the only curses we hear are almost comically mild: "Glory!" "Shoot!" "Oh blast it!" Indeed, gang members warn the younger ones to avoid "bad habits" like cursing. They may smoke cigarettes, integral to the image, but they don't much care for booze and are leery of drugs. As well they might be. M & M, *That Was Then, This is Now's* counterpart to the doomed Johnnycake, takes LSD, goes psychotic, is hospitalized (the doctor announces solemnly, "He may have lost his mind forever") and is told that his chromosomes are so messed up that he must forget his dream of a large family.

In *Rebel Without a Cause*, James Dean is trying to cope with a new society, with a new girl, with his parents, with adult authority. He copes in part by means of wry humor, a detachment that is missing in Hinton's books and in the films made from them. Rather than ask her characters to cope with adults, wryly or otherwise, Hinton either removes them or removes their authority. The Oedipal struggle is displaced to older siblings. Ponyboy's parents are dead; he lives with and is supported by his big brother, Darry, a football star who gave up college to keep the family

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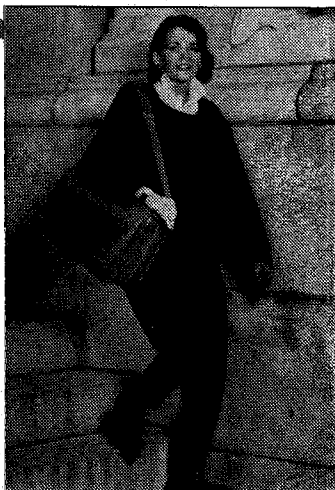
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together. Ponyboy fears and idolizes him. Tex's mother is dead (after a fight with his father, she walked off in the snow to go dancing, caught pneumonia and quickly succumbed), and his father forgets for months at a time to return home or to send money. Tex lives with and is supported by his older brother, Mace, a basketball star, whom he fears and admires. Rusty-James's mother ran away; his father, once a lawyer, is a hopeless drunk on welfare who wanders in and out of the house mumbling, "What strange lives you two lead," to Rusty-James and his idolized older brother, the Motorcycle Boy (about whom Hinton seems to feel much as Lady Caroline Lamb felt about Byron: "Mad, bad and dangerous to know"). Like Dallas Winston, the Motorcycle Boy is shot to death by the police, leaving the hero to inherit his romantic mantle—even to the extent of going color-blind. Bryon has no father but does have a mother, depicted as a model of saintly virtue. She behaves, however, with a remarkable lack of maternal responsibility or even curiosity. Not only do Bryon and Mark sometimes not "come home for weeks" without being reprimanded but their being beaten black and blue elicits little concern. Mom notices ten stitches in Mark's head: "How did that happen?" "And Mark answered, 'Fight,' and the subject was dropped. That was a good thing about Mom—she'd cry over a dog with a piece of glass in his paw but remained unhysterical when we came home clobbered. . . . Parents never know what all their kids do. . . . It's a law." The laws of Hinton's books are the laws of the cowboy movies, the laws of romance.

According to a children's librarian in Connecticut, Hinton and Judy Blume have long been the most popular authors of "reluctant readers" in the junior-high age group, youngsters who generally "wouldn't be caught dead in a library." Hinton's books "go out by themselves," without having to be recommended by adults or assigned by teachers or cleverly packaged ("Swiss Family Robinson is about survival—just like *Rambo*"). At the Philadelphia Free Library I was told that the four novels enjoy a "highly active shelf-life," greatly enhanced by the release of the filmed versions. When my 16-year-old niece told me she'd read Hinton "as a kid," I asked her why. "I liked Matt Dillon," she answered.

In the Young Adult section of the Philadelphia library, I spotted eleven paperback copies of *Tex* (the hardcover copy was in Adult Fiction), sandwiched with twelve paperback copies of *Star Wars*, "by George Lucas," three of *Pickwick Papers* and two of *Gone With the Wind*. Browsing through this area I could come to no clear sense of what constitutes Young Adult fiction. *The Seven-per-Cent Solution* was there, so was *Tell Me That You Love Me*, *Junie Moon*, so was Reynolds Price's *A Long and Happy Life* and novels by Ella Leffland, Ernest Gann and John Knowles. As a specific marketing category Young Adult fiction ("Y.A." for short) appears to be about twenty years old. I have no memory as a child in the 1940s and a teen-ager in the 1950s of any such literary label. One read baby books (mostly pictures), and then one read books. "Books" meant a melange of everything available that told a story—Dumas, Dickens, Hardy Boys, Stevenson, Alcott, sea books, horse books, mystery books. Adult fiction meant *Lady Chatterley's Lover* or *Peyton Place* or *By Love Possessed*. Rereading as an adult *Huckleberry Finn*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *David Copperfield*, *Animal Farm* and other classics, I of course read them differently, just as I now know what the *A* in *The Scarlet Letter* stands for (the seventh-grade teacher who assigned us this novel never bothered to explain), but at the time

of my first acquaintance, I was never under the impression that I was reading literature packaged for my "age group."

The successful marketing of Young Adult fiction to teen-age consumers is defended by some, who point out that the choice is not between an adolescent's reading *Tex* and reading *Sons and Lovers* but between reading *Tex* and reading nothing. Librarians are deeply concerned about the drop in reading once children reach high school or even junior high. "They come to the library only when it's time to research a school assignment," one told me. The causes are doubtless varied, but the hope is that those who did acquire the habit of reading for fun in grade school will rediscover it in their later teens. Meanwhile, the spinning stands of Harlequin Romances and movie tie-ins may keep the idea of reading alive and the books of S.E. Hinton in circulation. Asked if she would ever consider branching out into adult fiction as Judy Blume has, Hinton said she didn't find adults as interesting, because adolescence is "the time of the most rapid change, when ideals are clashing against the walls of compromise." That she is able to evoke for her audience how teen-agers feel about those clashes is indisputable. She once remarked, "Ponyboy is how I felt at 14." There are millions of Ponyboys out there, soulfully dreaming, sentimental, cool. □

Surrogates

BRAD GOOCH

ELSEWHERE. By Jonathan Strong. Ballantine Books. 167 pp. \$4.95.

Elsewhere is a family novel without the standard father, mother and kids. Jonathan Strong, author of *Tike and Five Stories* and *Ourselves*, writes about the tugs, intimacies and grudges that make family life so thick and charged. But here, in place of a nuclear family, he groups together a high school teacher, Burt Stokes; his teen-age student, Nell Parshall (now his wife); and her baby fathered by Anthony Ognissanti, Burt's prize student, who was smashed to death by a bus. The three live

Brad Gooch is the author of *Jailbait* and *Other Stories* (Sea Horse Press).

together in a "three-layer decorated wedding cake of a house."

Right away this offbeat family is disturbed when the baby is mysteriously kidnapped. "Our baby has been taken," Burt writes on his phosphorescent word processor, "not actually my baby, but her baby, and his." Burt then lets loose a story with all the weird proportions and time warps of a verbal confession. Each new anecdote, character sketch and memory clouds the soup. Burt's immediate family soon widens to include troubled students, cautiously supportive teachers and Puritan neighbors looming judgmentally nearby. But for the TV antennas their small New England town—moody, tense, inbred—differs very little from those in Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales*.

Although the suspense in *Elsewhere* is

built around the identity of the kidnaper, its true mystery is Anthony. This dark-eyed 15-year-old, the author of four slim volumes of poetic prose, has somehow drawn all the main characters to him, and his quick death, possibly a suicide, causes a social and emotional brush fire. Suddenly all of his friends feel compelled to find substitutes or stand-ins. Nell runs to Burt as a surrogate father for the baby. Burt has sex with Liam, an edgy pal of Anthony's; tough punk Ladro, whose fix on Anthony was adolescently expressed as hate (he once snarled to Burt in the school lavatory, "If there's anything ever in his life, I'm going to take it"), seduces Nell at the end.

Although Strong's story is twisted, his writing is not. His simple, often monosyllabic style vaguely suggests the clumsy dialect of the teen-agers who pass through his novel. Speaking through Burt, his voice sounds faintly like Holden Caulfield's, and yet the feeling and insight here is solidly mature. Strong knows how to explain half-shades of perception, and his eye is cameralike, though the details are singled out by emotional clairvoyance rather than by mechanical fluke:

And there were the kids with schedule conflicts and slips I had to sign. Anthony's head poked above the crowd, and he caught my eye. His arm snuck between two tenth graders and placed a small fat notebook, just like his last one, on my blotter. His hand looked bigger than the tenth-grade hands. It was dark, with beautiful veins and bony knuckles. It pulled back, and the crowd closed in around me.

The principle of substitution or stand-in at work in *Elsewhere* keeps it dreamlike. Characters try to balance a human equation by using each other, as when Paula, a fellow teacher, accuses Burt by letter of substituting his students for adult friends: "What is it you've been looking for, Burt? The selfishness of your youth? Something that didn't happen then? The parts that didn't come together?" There's even a hint that Anthony, if he threw himself in front of the bus, might have been trying to sacrifice himself for his parents, who died in an accidental house fire while Anthony was out having juvenile sex. Burt wonders on his word processor:

He might have started running, maybe as if he was running to a burning house again, not caring if anything hit him, running just to see if he would live through it. That way Anthony

would put himself in what he thought of as God's hands.

The most glaring substitution, though, is of a made-up family for a biological one. Yet the trick works. Nabokov needed to match a hairy older man with a lovely young nymphomaniac in *Lolita* to get at the shock of romantic love. The regular guy/girl formula had been played out. Perhaps the same is true about depicting family intimacy here. Certainly many modern substitute families have been convincing. Of television sitcoms, *Bachelor Father*, with its breezy household of debonair single uncle, adopted niece and Oriental cook, was just as effective as *Leave It to Beaver* in showing the lighter side of American home life. And in a more tragic vein, the fragile family assembled by Jim, Judy and Plato in the observatory scene of *Rebel Without a Cause* sustained more of the actual weight of love than the rebel's own skittish family.

A listing of *Elsewhere's* plot elements sounds horrific: suicide, teacher-student love, kidnapping, hustling, child-beating, abortion. And yet by a happy combination of talents, Strong treats these things humanely enough to get us to understand them. Using nickel words arranged with a tender ear and an exact sentimental insight, he eases us into a world full of conflict, yearning and love. □

THEATER.

PAUL BERMAN

La Chunga
The Bone Ring
Deep Sleep

Balzac and Zola are full of scenes with actresses rushing on stage and driving audiences into a sexual tizzy. The curtain goes up, Nana appears beneath the proscenium arch as the Blond Venus in see-through mesh and Paris goes wild.

American writers don't write scenes like that. Sex on stage seems to frighten us. It exists, but we don't like to talk about it. The theater is different in this respect from the movies, where Americans have no trouble gaping and swooning and later admitting to it. But bring out a Nana live and in person, and even the critics, whose duty is to report their feelings, go shy. Having spent two hours fainting in the aisle, they will write that Nana was O.K. but that some

actress encased in an ordinary body was better, or that Nana's triumph was strictly a matter of technique, or maybe they won't mention Nana at all. Some time ago a play about porno filmmaking featured a lot of stripping, and a famously nasty critic remarked that, of the two actresses on stage, the one with much the bigger bosom had much the smaller talent. I applauded the remark and admired the critic for being so clever. I too like to pretend sexiness on stage is dismissible and talent will out. Yet when I think back on that play today, the bigger bosom comes to mind, and not the bigger talent. For stage sexiness is not dismissible. Balzac and Zola were right. The right face and figure can bring down the house, or ought to if we are honest about it.

Mario Vargas Llosa has written a new play, *La Chunga*, which is running in English translation at the INTAR stage on 42nd Street until March 9. And it's clear from the start that the production had better come up with a knockout actress. The scene is a poor man's bar in a poor people's city in Peru, 1945, and the four dice players are full of talk about how one of them, a pimp and a cad, has acquired a girlfriend of tremendous sex appeal. Fine, the audience thinks—let's see the sex appeal. Talk continues. The dice players razz the barmaid, *La Chunga*, played by Sheila Dabney, who is herself no slouch at projecting sexiness from the stage.

Then the girlfriend, *La Meche*, arrives. She wears a green dress that emphasizes her hips, and she sashays with such exaggerated swivel and exhales so much film-noir cigarette smoke that it's almost embarrassing to watch. The part is played by Maritza Rivera, who is not at all well known. And it does seem that Rivera is going to fall figuratively on her—but why say that the green dress emphasizes her hips? Hips are a fashion euphemism. Rivera does not, in any case, fall flat. Quite the contrary.

She is a petite, pretty woman, or more than pretty, though beauty doesn't define her sex appeal. Just as some faces are photogenic, others are made for the stage. Rivera's face has a natural glow; the inner light bulb has been switched on, and watching her becomes effortless, even when the action is elsewhere. She walks, stands by the bar, sits on a barstool, embraces her lover, looks confused, pulls off the green dress to reveal a black full-length slip, and each move she makes projects a

mood that is half youthful uncertainty, half erotic solitude. You sit transfixed.

Transfixation is the subject of Vargas Llosa's play. The men at the bar and the barmaid, too, can think of nothing else but La Meche. The pimp loses at dice and, to raise a new stake, pawns La Meche to the barmaid, who takes her upstairs to bed, which scandalizes everyone. That's Act I. In Act II, La Meche has disappeared, either to make her fortune in Lima or because the pimp has killed her. But no one has forgotten her single visit to the bar, and each person in turn spins out his dreams of love or sex—romantic dreams sometimes, more often ugly dreams and reveries of oppression.

Many of these dreams don't come alive on the INTAR stage. Partly that's because Vargas Llosa gets his narrative threads so tangled you lose interest in trying to pick them apart. Partly it's because of difficulties in cultural translation. The play is written in an operatic style marked by dramatic declamations and lofty romantic statements. La Meche talks grandly of abandoning herself to love. But the director, Max Ferra, can't

decide whether to have these lines performed as arias or according to the dictates of American theater realism. Shawn Elliot as the pimp makes the most of both styles and convinces you that the character himself contains them both. He's one slithery creep, Shawn Elliot. But the other performers can't help stumbling. Dabney is a superb actress who commands the rawest emotions of anyone working in New York, yet even she wobbles between wooden declamations and realistic soul-baring. The other dice players remain rather bland, and Rivera's La Meche is more convincing as a passive object of desire than as a protagonist in her own right.

In short everything fails in *La Chunga*—except the main thing. For during the course of these two acts, you are surely sitting in a bar in a poor people's city in northern Peru. And you are surely transfixed by the lousy pimp's pretty girlfriend. Vargas Llosa hasn't fulfilled several of his ambitions in the play, but he and Max Ferra certainly succeed in blowing a sexual haze across that Peruvian bar. Or rather they succeed in evoking an atmosphere in which

the right actress can do this. At the end you watch Sheila Dabney retire alone to bed, dreaming of La Meche, and never was an amorous ache more palpable.

Another play by a writer whose reputation lies outside the theater, *The Bone Ring* by Donald Hall, ran recently at the Theater of the Open Eye. The play is based on Hall's *String Too Short to Be Saved*, a memoir of New Hampshire summers in the 1940s. Grandpa milks cows, recites poems, tells stories. Grandma pulls out the bone ring heirloom from the attic and reflects on the Civil War. All of which is more than a little bit corny, and doubly so because of the television-style music track and the gee-whiz acting of Michael Kelly Boone as the boy.

The Bone Ring managed to be effective theater, however, because George Hall gave a fine performance as Grandpa and as the boy-narrator in his older years, and because double-casting doubled the evocations of the script. But mostly it was because Hall succeeded at putting his play into verse. The New England tautness and verbal density is never self-conscious or arty, the pace is stately, and though Kent Paul's directing could be faulted on other grounds, it was absolutely faithful to Hall's lyric rhythm, which was its most important task.

How much better this play was than John Jesurun's *Deep Sleep* at La MaMa, which received much more applause in the press. Jesurun's play is a sci-fi meditation on the problem of whether real-life people are actually on film, watching a film of people who are actually real-life, or is it the reverse? And sitting through more than a hour of this, I found myself reflecting on a passage in Kenneth Rexroth's autobiography where he commented, concerning the avant-garde of the 1920s, that avant-gardes have always consisted of more frauds and fakes than geniuses. And if that was true in the 1920s, what can we say today? Jesurun is a hero of the downtown avant-garde; but that doesn't make his *Deep Sleep* any less of a fake. Maybe his other plays have been better; I can't say. This one has the appearance of posing an interesting philosophical problem, yet the reality of posing a boring one; the appearance of using a novel technique, yet the reality of reviving film clichés of eons ago; the appearance of stream of consciousness, yet the reality of babble. □

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FILMS.

ANDREW KOPKIND

Parting Glances

The most difficult assignment in the cultural workplace is the task of transcendence, of moving beyond the restrictions of common consciousness to produce a work of art or drama or literature that is at the same time both of the culture and about it, that expresses both participation in a certain sensibility and perspective on it. No sword is stuck more securely in any stone. Time after time artists and writers strain mightily to achieve that transcendent authenticity and end up with little more than a piece of propaganda and special pleading on the one hand, or exploitation and condescension on the other. In the case of what indelicate ideologues used to call oppressed cultures, the material is often so informed by the oppression that any presentation reinforces the very values on which it presumes to comment. To enter into the debate about racism, say, or class privilege is to accept the most destructive terms of the debate for the sake of argument. A kind of artistic Gödel's theorem works to contain the criticism of any situation within its own limits; the dog eats its own tail, the hand draws itself. Take film: from *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* to *The Color Purple*, movies that set out to treat one or another problem of black oppression end up as part of that problem, in the former case by confirming racist myths of intermarriage, and in the latter by celebrating the most awful racial stereotypes even with the purpose of deploring them. There are many ways to judge the merit of a movie and other tests for success, but filmmakers (and film critics) must live with the infuriating fact that they can never escape the confines of the conflicts they pose.

Parting Glances, a low-budget but high-minded feature set in New York's upscale gay community, runs smack up against the problem of transcendence. Writer-director Bill Sherwood depicts a day in the life of three young men connected on the personal level by bonds of love and romance, and on the social level by a common history of gay experience. Michael (Richard Ganoung) and Robert (John Bolger) are guppie lovers with a nice apartment on the Up-

per West Side, good bodies and a comfortable relationship six years long—attributes I've listed in the apparent order of importance. Nick (Steve Buscemi) was Michael's boyfriend once in that brief Camelot of postliberation madness, when the new gay consciousness was being created every day in the streets, every night in the dance halls, every summer on Fire Island. Now Nick is terminally ill; his specific syndrome is never mentioned by name in the movie, as it is understood but seldom spoken in the world where these characters now live. That is only one of many accurate details Sherwood supplies, some subtle and some obvious: the maternal fat woman (lesbian?) who oversees the downtown party scene and counsels and comforts the lovers; the sleazy queen (also fat) who holds court in his house on the Island and keeps a retinue in tow with money and influence; the ambitious twinkie who plans to float horizontally into the upper reaches of gay society; the music (Bronski Beat and Brahms); the interior decoration; the clothes; the attitudes; the little disturbances; and, of course, the great fear.

According to the somewhat stretched and thin plot, Robert and Michael's liaison is foundering, for undefined reasons. The lads love each other—the script says they do—but Robert feels the relationship has become a bit stale and predictable, and he is preparing to take a long, perhaps permanent vacation to Africa to help the natives there. Michael prefers to minister to victims closer to home. He is seeing his first love through the last months of illness and, in the process, trying to reconcile the expansive dreams of their time together with the lowered emotional expectations of the current period. In the course of twenty-four hours the significant others pick over the problems on the surface of their lives but arrive at few interesting insights. Perhaps they are incapable of analysis; maybe they are bound by the insistent superficiality of their particular social set. Only Nick—Old Nick—looks beyond their insulated life to imagine a future he will never know.

Sherwood writes and directs from deep inside the culture of his characters. There is nothing they do or say that hasn't been done or said by their real-life analogues. They are absorbed in their relationships, they worry about their friends, they walk the customary sexual tightropes between obtuse straights and demanding gays. Their homosexuality is

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not the specific issue of the film. It is not about coming out to parents or spouses; it is not about discrimination and segregation; it is not about the morality or the technique of the vice that had better not mumble its name, not these days. But it is certainly about being gay, and as such it participates in the broad social debate about the aspects of that orientation. Once in the discussion, the terms are apt to seem trite, the people archetypal, the issues banal. Oppression not only delegitimizes gay culture; it also stereotypifies all its elements. Sherwood has been praised for standing some of the clichés on their heads: a gay man tells a straight woman how to save her marriage; the straight people at a party in SoHo are more promiscuous than the gays; a gay bashes a straight, or almost. But stereotypes in reverse are stereotypes nonetheless, and within the frame the filmmaker has chosen there is no earthly way to transcend them.

The trick is to make a different frame. Someday someone will make a movie that has gay characters who do more than agonize over their gay relationships, who engage the world around them from their singular sensibility. So far, however, commerce and consciousness hold artists in sexual ghettos with only an occasional token allowed to venture forth without the costume and the values of the closet. *Parting Glances* is a pretty good ghetto movie, but it knows its place too well. □

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LETTERS.

(Continued From Page 258)

bolism in the fact that the 27th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party opened on February 25, the thirtieth anniversary of Khrushchev's secret speech to the 20th Party Congress. This is a clear anti-Stalinist message to every politically sophisticated party member. However, the real forerunner of the upcoming congress was the 22nd Party Congress, held in October 1961.

Cohen is mistaken when he writes that the secret speech to the 20th Congress was "the manifesto of Khrushchev's de-Stalinization program," and that it "legitimized . . . fundamental change in the Soviet system." The speech was exclusively a detailed revelation of Stalin's crimes and fundamental errors, and it was never published or officially acknowledged. Although the secret speech made the entire de-Stalinization process possible, Khrushchev's program for fundamental change was the Third Party Program adopted at the 22nd Congress. The most significant thing about the current Draft Party Program is that it is called the New Edition of the Third Program.

It retains the concept of a gradual transition to a division of power between the party, the state and public organizations, and it legitimizes the political nature of trade unions. In my view, the pre-congress discussion and delegate-selection process has already guaranteed that the transfer of real power to the Russians and to public organizations will be agreed to in principle by the congress. The issue that appears to be in contention is how and at what rate it is to be done.

Khrushchev's secret speech had an irreversible effect on the party, but it was never made public. The anti-Stalinist documents and speeches of the 22nd Congress were published widely and this had an irreversible effect on the entire Soviet people. For days the Soviet press was filled with detailed exposures of the crimes committed by Stalin and many of his closest associates against millions of Soviet citizens.

Symbolically, a resolution was passed by the 22nd Congress to remove Stalin's body from Lenin's mausoleum after a powerful speech by D. Lazurkina, a delegate who had spent seventeen years in Stalin's prisons and labor camps. The reburial of Stalin was commemorated by Yevgeny Yevtushenko in a poem titled "The Heirs of Stalin," which ends with the lines:

And I turn to our Government
with a request:
to double, treble
the guards over that gravestone slab,
so that Stalin should not rise,
and with Stalin—the past.

Paul Robeson Jr.

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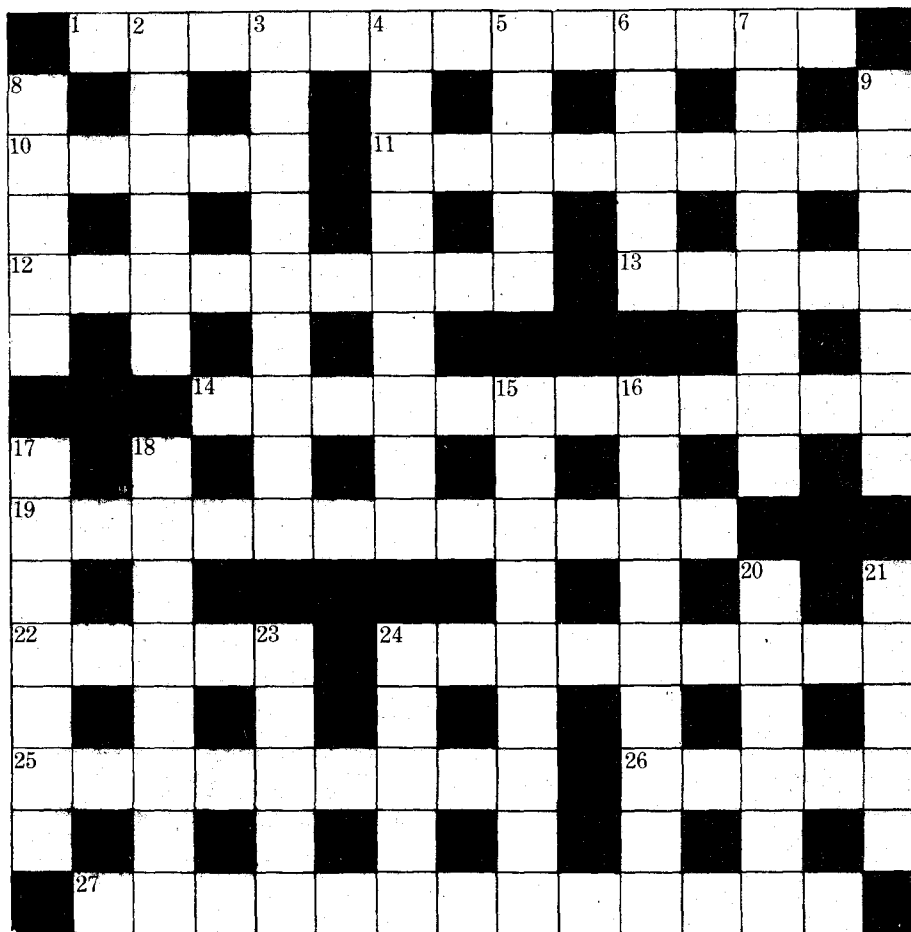
SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 2092

O	R	A	N	G	E	S	A	N	D	S	L	O	T
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Crossword Puzzle No. 2093

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

- 1 In a sense, he might be responsible for "Canterbury Tales." (6,1,6)
- 10 Such a car might be used for hauling copper. (5)
- 11 Such as the clepsydra and hour glass are obviously not for young folk. (3,6)
- 12 A wee step's taken by such, but they're real climbers. (5,4)
- 13 The elegance of a princess, as we remember, might be a preliminary subject at table for some. (5)
- 14 A classic synonym might be "Vance came disguised." (6,3,3)
- 19 After WW II, this sounded like good military strategy. (8,4)
- 22 Those who play in a famous home lose their ante, but runs might be so made. (5)
- 24 Indian head (as some might say) in the sea. (9)
- 25 Coming from here, you might find it even hotter, they say. (6,3)
- 26 A chief is evidently in front. (5)
- 27 Toll road? It's followed conscientiously. (3,4,2,4)

DOWN

- 2 Not the rating of a basketball player! (It's also nothing in the environment of one with certain aspirations.) (6)
- 3 You cut 'em first! (4,5)
- 4 What Nixon tried to do with Jackson. (9)
- 5 Waits for one club, for instance, with two bridge opponents. (5)

- 6 Hold on—it's a peachy description! (5)
- 7 Elsa's Dream, not as disturbed as it might be by stones. (8)
- 8 Supposedly healthy places with a large number, but some illnesses are associated with such. (5)
- 9 Scatter a few drops of the best water, reputedly, and possibly agree about how 8 starts. (7)
- 15 Personate variation of language. (9)
- 16 A chairman might on retirement find it close. (9)
- 17 Expand, if it's liberally surrounded. (7)
- 18 Art panels try and pitch with it, rather confusedly. (8)
- 20 Concerning what might be a fast time, you'll have to yield. (6)
- 21 Dines out, but such nasty remarks might be made! (5)
- 23 Time for a joke on you and me to be getting a rise out of it. (3-2)
- 24 Hugh was King of France, but almost sounds done for! (5)

SEE LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION AT LEFT

PUZZLED?

No more cross words. If you don't see why "Lures" are "Ground Rules," send for those of Mr. Lewis to *The Nation*, 72 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10011.

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